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# THE BROWNIES: THEIR BOOK

BY  
PALMER COX



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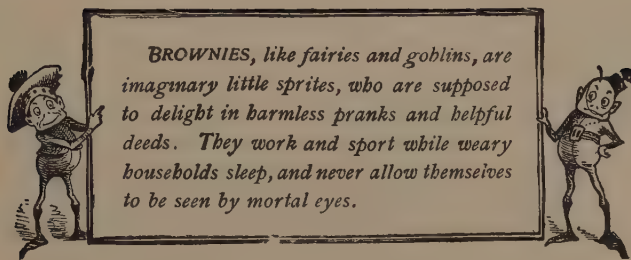
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*BROWNIES, like fairies and goblins, are imaginary little sprites, who are supposed to delight in harmless pranks and helpful deeds. They work and sport while weary households sleep, and never allow themselves to be seen by mortal eyes.*





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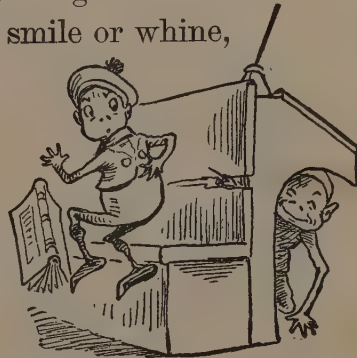
## THE BROWNIES AT SCHOOL.



S Brownies rambled 'round one night,  
A country schoolhouse came in sight;  
And there they paused awhile to speak  
About the place, where through the week  
The scholars came, with smile or whine,

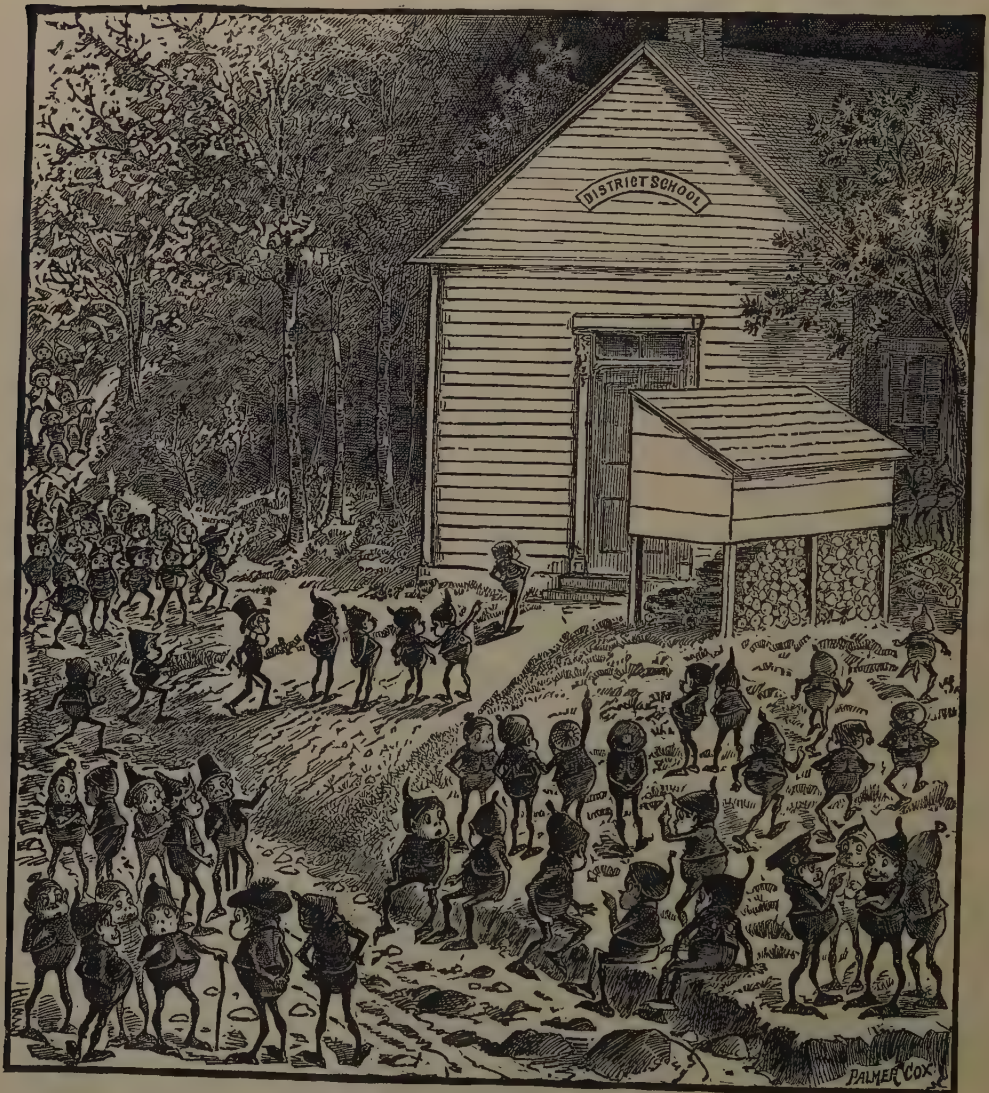
Each morning at the stroke of nine.

"This is," said one, "the place, indeed,  
Where children come to write and read.  
'T is here, through rules and rods to suit,  
The young idea learns to shoot;  
And here the idler with a grin  
In nearest neighbor pokes the pin,

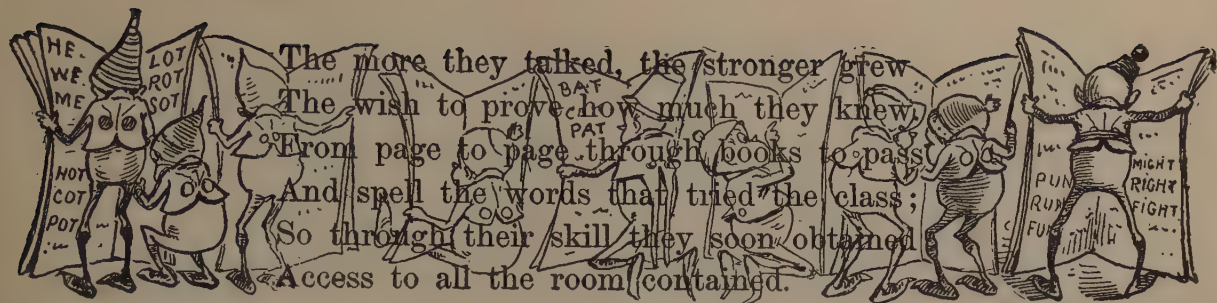


Or sighs to break his scribbled slate  
And spring at once to man's estate.  
How oft from shades of yonder grove  
I've viewed at eve the shouting drove  
As from the door they crowding broke,  
Like oxen from beneath the yoke."

Another said: "The teacher's chair,  
The ruler, pen, and birch are there;  
The blackboard hangs against the wall;  
The slate's at hand, the books and all.  
We might go in to read and write  
And master sums like scholars bright."







The more they talked, the stronger grew  
 The wish to prove how much they knew,  
 From page to page through books to pass  
 And spell the words that tried the class;  
 So through their skill they soon obtained  
 Access to all the room contained.

"I'll play," cried one, "the teacher's part;  
 I know some lessons quite by heart,  
 And every section of the land  
 To me is plain as open hand."

"With all respect, my friend, to you,"  
 Another said, "that would not do.  
 You're hardly fitted, sir, to rule;  
 Your place should be the dunce's stool.  
 You're not with great endowments  
 blessed;

Besides, your temper's not the best,  
 And those who train the budding mind  
 Should own a disposition kind.  
 The rod looks better on the tree  
 Than resting by the master's knee;  
 I'll be the teacher, if you please;  
 I know the rivers, lakes, and seas,

And, like a banker's clerk, can throw  
 The figures nimbly in a row.  
 I have the patience, love, and grace,  
 So requisite in such a case."

Now some bent o'er a slate or book,  
 And some at blackboards station took.  
 They clustered 'round the globe with zeal,  
 And kept it turning like a wheel.



Said one, "I've often  
 The world is rounder  
 And here, indeed, we  
 With both the poles  
 With latitudes and  
 All measured out on  
 Another said, "I thought  
 The world from Maine to  
 Or could, without a guide,  
 My way from Cork to Puget  
 But here so many things  
 That never dawned upon my  
 On sundry points, I blush  
 I've been a thousand miles  
 "'T is like an egg," another  
 "A little longer than it's wide,  
 With islands scattered through the seas  
 Where savages may live at ease;



heard it said,  
 than your head,  
 find it true.  
 at once in view,  
 each degree  
 land and sea."

I knew  
 Timbuctoo,  
 have found  
 Sound;  
 I find  
 mind,  
 to say,  
 astray."  
 cried,



PALMER COX.





And buried up in Polar snows  
 You find the hardy Eskimos;  
 While here and there some scorching spots  
 Are set apart for Hottentots.  
 And see the rivers small and great,  
 That drain a province or a state;  
 The name and shape of every nation;  
 Their faith, extent, and population;

And whether governed by a King,  
 A President, or council ring."

While some with such expressions bold  
 Surveyed the globe as 'round it rolled,  
 Still others turned to ink and pen,  
 And, spreading like a brooding hen,  
 They scrawled a page to show the band  
 Their special "style," or "business hand."



The teacher had enough to do,  
 To act his part to nature true:  
 He lectured well the infant squad,  
 He rapped the desk and shook the rod,  
 And stood the dunce upon the stool,  
 A laughing-stock to all the school—

But frequent changes please the crowd,  
 So lengthy reign was not allowed;  
 And when one master had his hour,  
 Another took the rod of power;  
 And thus they changed to suit the case,  
 Till many filled the honored place.

So taken up was every mind  
 With fun and study well combined,





They noticed not the hours depart,  
Until the sun commenced to dart  
A sheaf of lances, long and bright,  
Above the distant mountain height;  
Then from the schoolroom, in a heap,  
They jumped and tumbled, twenty deep,  
In eager haste to disappear  
In deepest shades of forests near.



When next the children gathered there,  
With wondering faces fresh and fair,  
It took an hour of morning prime,  
According to the teacher's time,  
To get the books in place once more,  
And order to the room restore.  
So great had been the haste to hide,  
The windows were left open wide;  
And scholars knew, without a doubt,  
That Brownies had been thereabout.





## THE BROWNIES' RIDE.



ONE night a cunning Brownie band  
Was roaming through a farmer's land,  
And while the rogues went prying 'round,  
The farmer's mare at rest they found;  
And peeping through the stable-door,  
They saw the harness that she wore.  
The sight was tempting to the eye,  
For there the cart was standing nigh.

"That mare," said one, "deserves her feed —  
Believe me, she's no common breed;  
Her grit is good: I 've seen her dash  
Up yonder slope without the lash,  
Until her load—a ton of hay—  
Went bouncing in beside the bay.



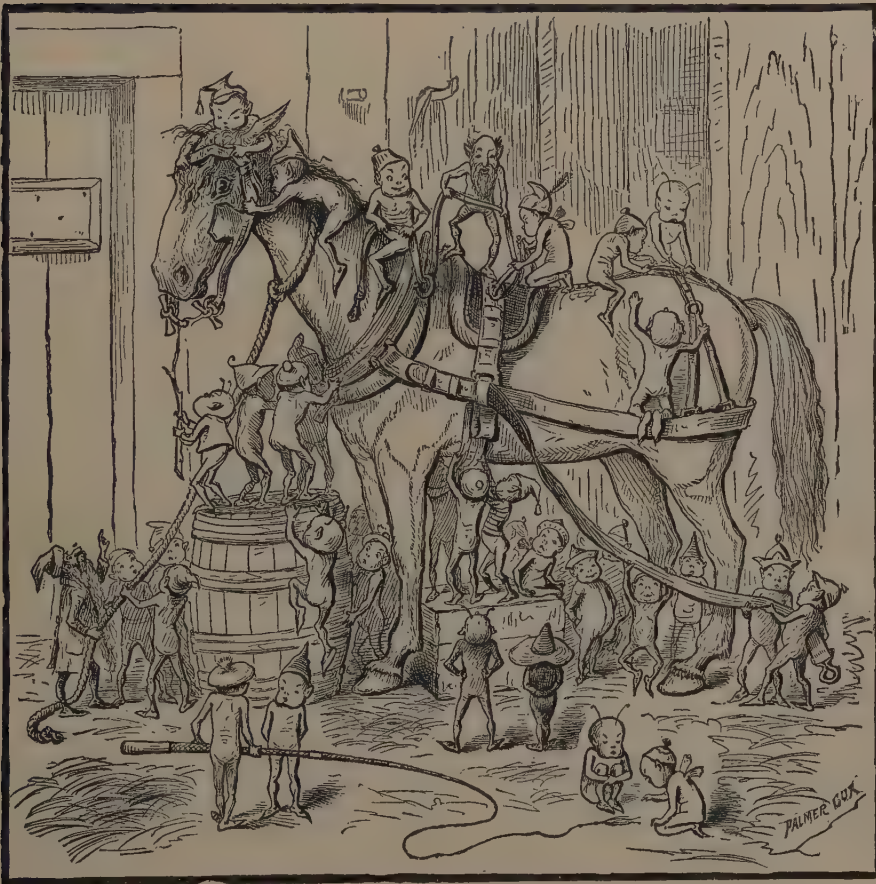
In this same cart, old Farmer Gill  
Takes all his corn and wheat to mill;  
It must be strong, though rude and rough;  
It runs on wheels, and that 's enough."

Now, Brownies seldom idle stand  
When there 's a chance for fun at hand.

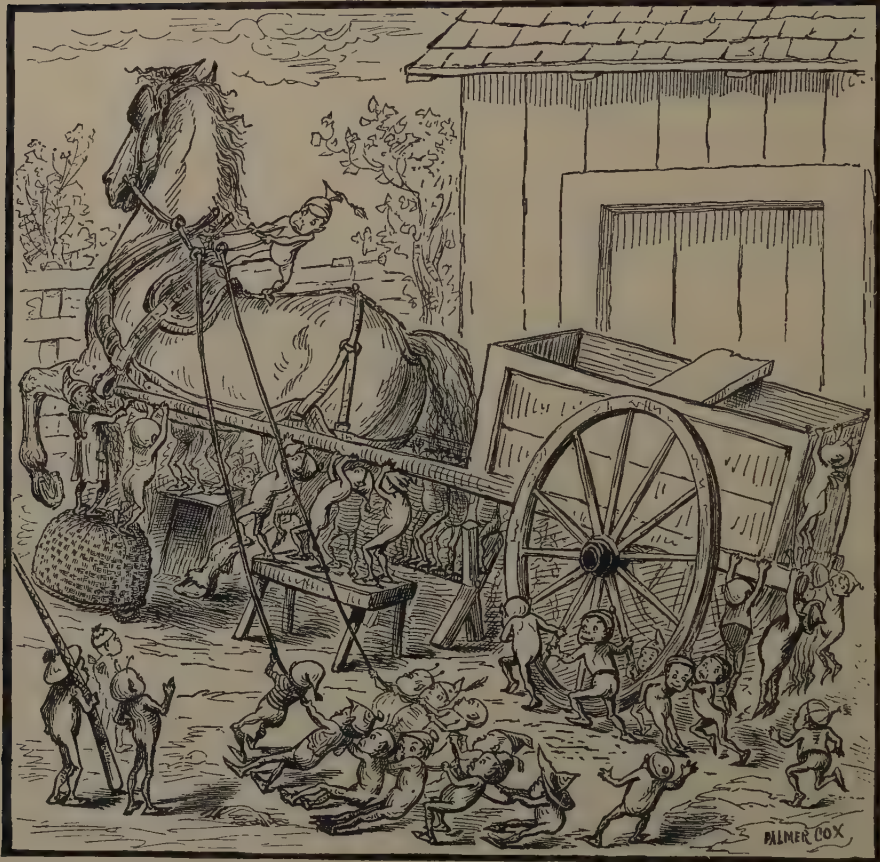


So plans were laid without delay;  
The mare was dragged from oats and hay,  
The harness from the peg they drew,  
And every one to action flew.  
It was a sight one should behold  
To see them working, young and old;

Two wrinkled elves, like leather browned,  
Whose beards descended near the ground,  
Along with youngsters did their best  
With all the ardor of the rest.

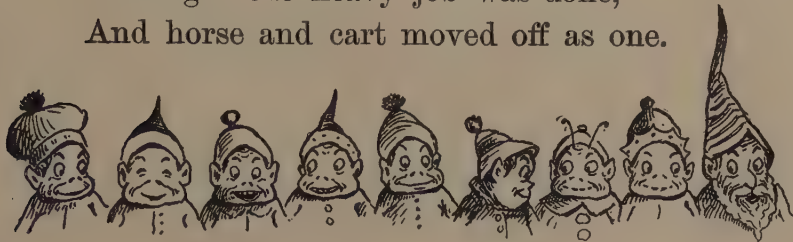


While some prepared a rein or trace,  
Another slid the bit in place;  
More buckled bands with all their might,  
Or drew the harness close and tight.



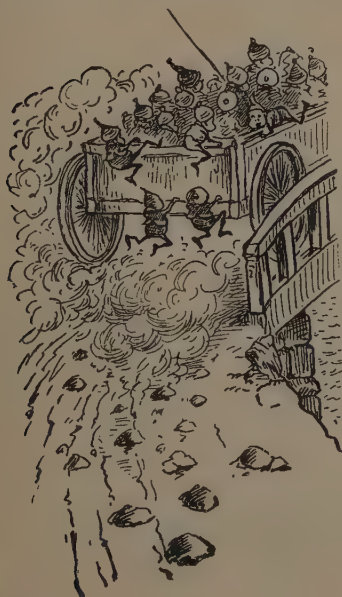
When every strap a buckle found,  
And every part was safe and sound,  
Then 'round the cart the Brownies flew,--  
The hardest task was yet to do.  
It often puzzles bearded men,  
Though o'er and o'er performed again.

Some held the shafts to steer them straight,  
 More did their best to balance weight,  
 While others showed both strength and art  
 In backing Mag into the cart.  
 At length the heavy job was done,  
 And horse and cart moved off as one.



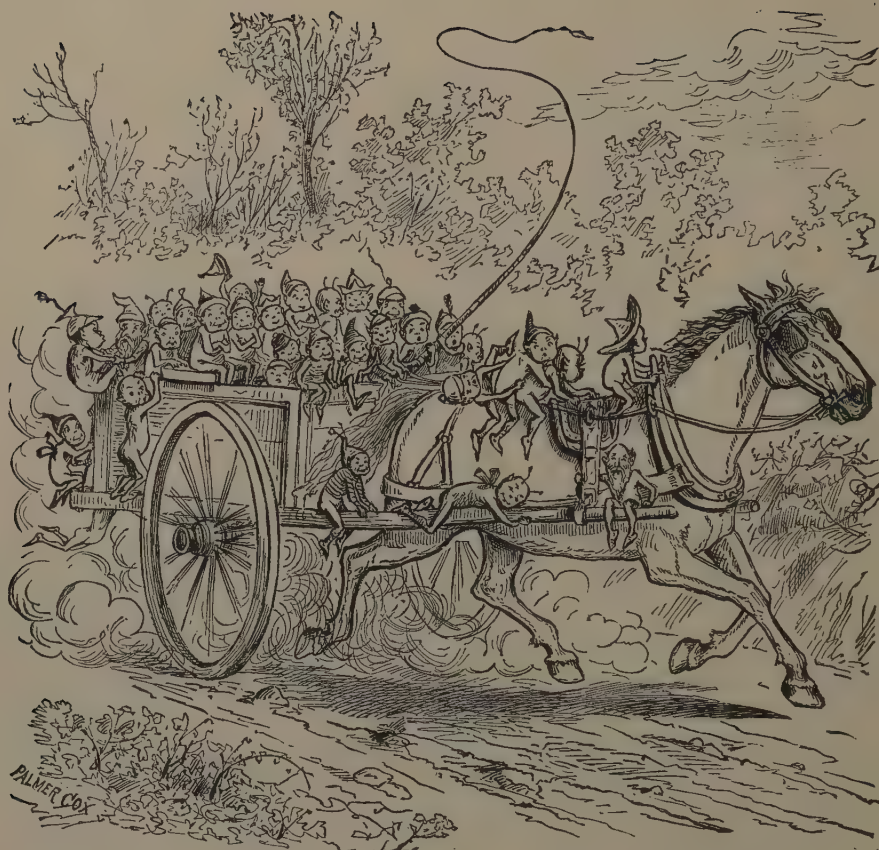
Now down the road the gentle steed  
 Was forced to trot at greatest speed.

A merrier crowd than journeyed there  
 Was never seen at Dublin Fair.  
 Some found a seat, while others stood,  
 Or hung behind as best they could;  
 While many, strung along, astride,  
 Upon the mare enjoyed the ride.



The night was dark, the lucky elves  
 Had all the turnpike to themselves.  
 No surly keeper barred the way,  
 For use of road demanding pay,  
 Nor were they startled by the cry  
 Of robbers shouting, "Stand or die!"  
 Across the bridge and up the hill  
 And through the woods to Warren's mill,  
 A lengthy ride, ten miles at least,—  
 Without a rest they drove the beast,  
 And then were loath enough to rein  
 Old Mag around for home again.





Nor was the speed, returning, slow;  
The mare was more inclined to go,



Because the feed of oats and hay  
Unfinished in her manger lay.  
So through the yard she wheeled her load  
As briskly as she took the road.  
No time remained to then undo  
The many straps which tight they drew.  
For in the east the reddening sky  
Gave warning that the sun was nigh.

The halter rope was  
About the nearest  
Then off they scam-  
And disappeared at



quickly wound  
post they found;  
pered, left and right,  
once from sight.



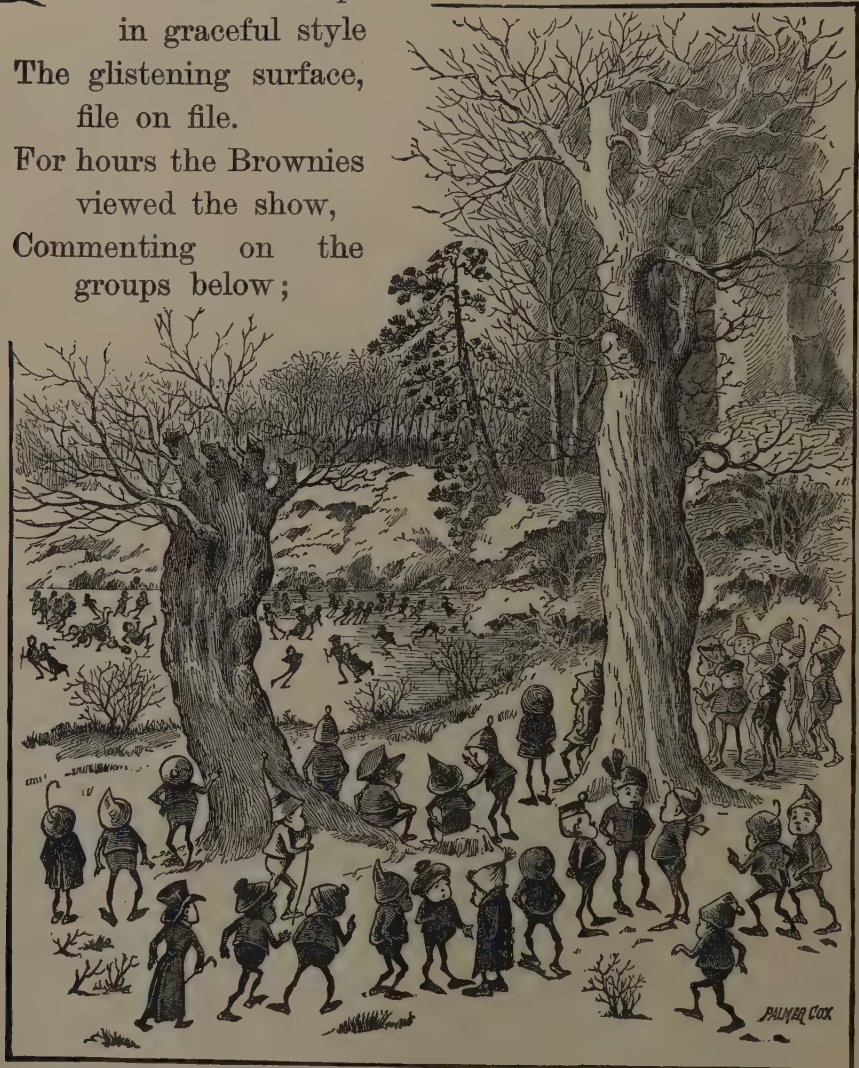
When Farmer Gill that morning fair  
Came out and viewed his jaded mare,  
I may not here in verse repeat  
His exclamations all complete.  
He gnashed his teeth, and glared around,  
And struck his fists, and stamped the ground,  
And chased the dog across the farm,  
Because it failed to give alarm.  
“I ’d give a stack of hay,” he cried,  
“To catch the rogue who stole the ride!”  
But still awry suspicion flew,—  
Who stole the ride he never knew.



## THE BROWNIES ON SKATES.



ONE night, when the cold moon hung low  
And winter wrapped the world in snow  
And bridged the streams in wood and field  
With ice as smooth as shining shield,  
Some skaters swept  
in graceful style  
The glistening surface,  
file on file.  
For hours the Brownies  
viewed the show,  
Commenting on the  
groups below ;







Said one: "That pleasure might be ours —  
We have the feet and motive powers;  
No mortal need us Brownies teach,  
If skates were but within our reach."  
Another answered: "Then, my friend,  
To hear my plan let all attend.  
I have a building in my mind  
That we within an hour can find.

Three golden balls hang by the door,  
Like oranges from Cuba's shore;  
Behind the dusty counter stands  
A native of queer, far-off lands;  
The place is filled with various things,  
From baby-carts to banjo-strings;



Here hangs a gun without a lock  
Some Pilgrim bore to Plymouth rock;  
And there a pair of goggles lie,  
That saw the red-coats marching by;

While piles of club and rocker skates  
Of every shape the buyer waits!  
Though second-hand, I'm sure they'll do,  
And serve our wants as well as new.  
That place we'll enter as we may,  
To-morrow night, and bear away  
A pair, the best that come to hand,  
For every member of the band."



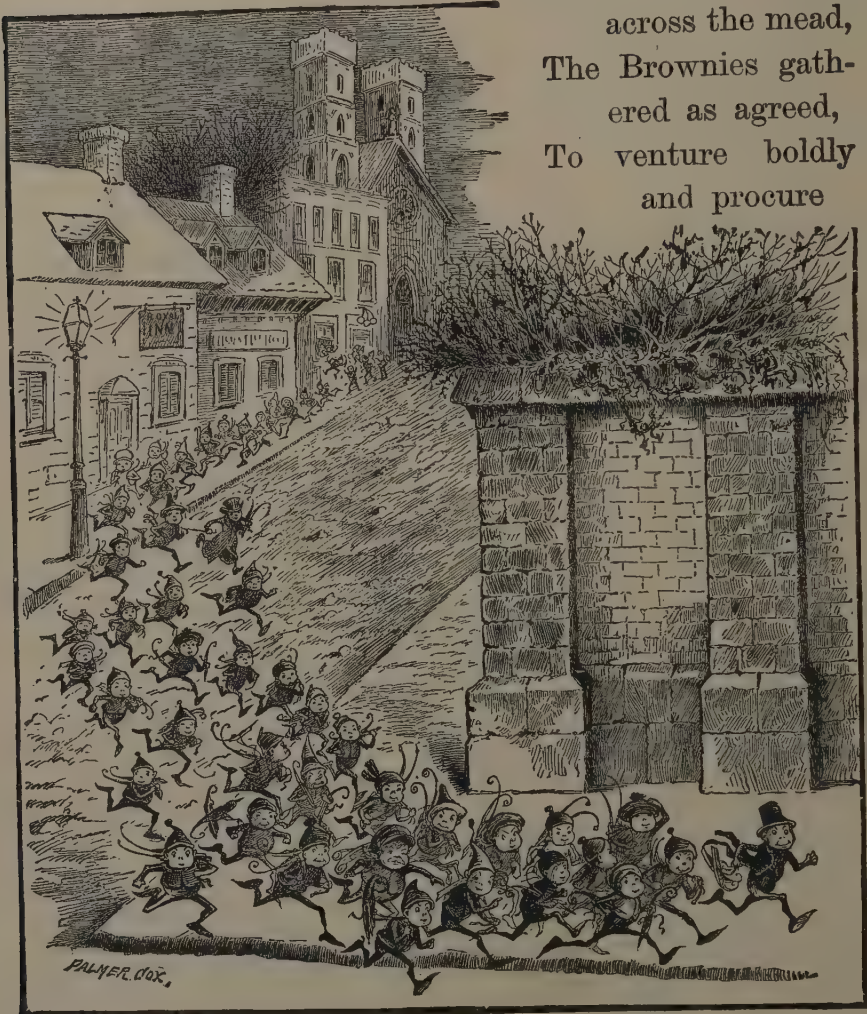
At once, the enterprise so bold



Received support from young and old.  
A place to muster near the town,  
And meeting hour they noted down;  
And then retiring for the night,  
They soon were lost to sound and sight.

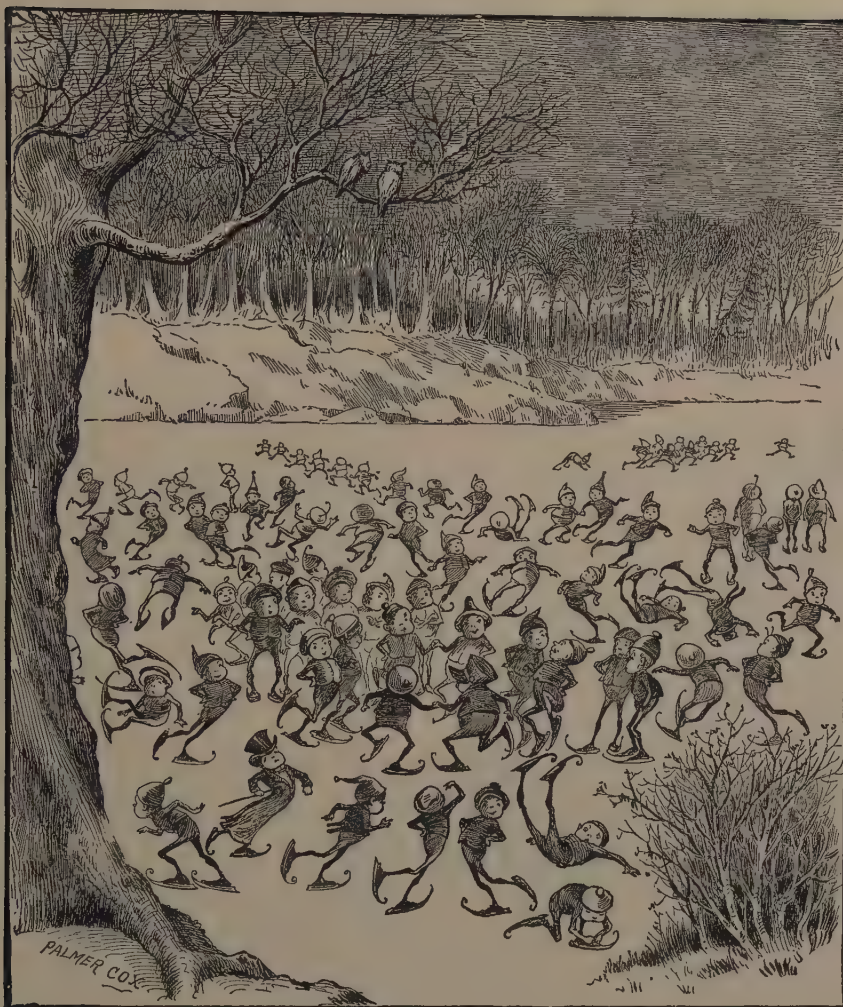
When evening next her visit paid  
To fold the earth in robes of shade,

From out the woods  
across the mead,  
The Brownies gath-  
ered as agreed,  
To venture boldly  
and procure



The skates that would their fun insure.  
As mice can get to cake and cheese  
Without a key whene'er they please,  
So, cunning Brownies can proceed  
And help themselves to what they need.





For bolts and bars they little care  
If but a nail is wanting there!  
Or, failing this, with ease descend  
Like Santa Claus and gain their end.  
As children to the windows fly  
At news of Jumbo passing by,  
So rushed the eager band away  
To fields of ice without delay.



Though far too large at heel and toe,  
The skates were somehow made to go.  
But out behind and out before,  
Like spurs, they stuck a span or more,  
Alike afflicting foe and friend



In bringing journeys to an end.  
They had their slips and sudden spreads,  
Where heels flew higher than their heads,  
As people do, however nice,  
When venturing first upon the ice.  
But soon they learned to curve and wheel  
And cut fine scrolls with scoring steel,  
To race in clusters to and fro,  
To jump and turn and backward go,  
Until a rest on bed so cool,  
Was more the wonder than the rule.

But from the lake they all withdrew  
Some hours before the night was through,  
And hastened back with lively feet  
Through narrow lane and silent street,  
Until they reached the broker's door  
With every skate that left the store.

And, ere the first  
The skates were  
Of their brief ab-  
Was left within the



faint gleam of day,  
safely stowed away  
sence not a trace  
dusty place.

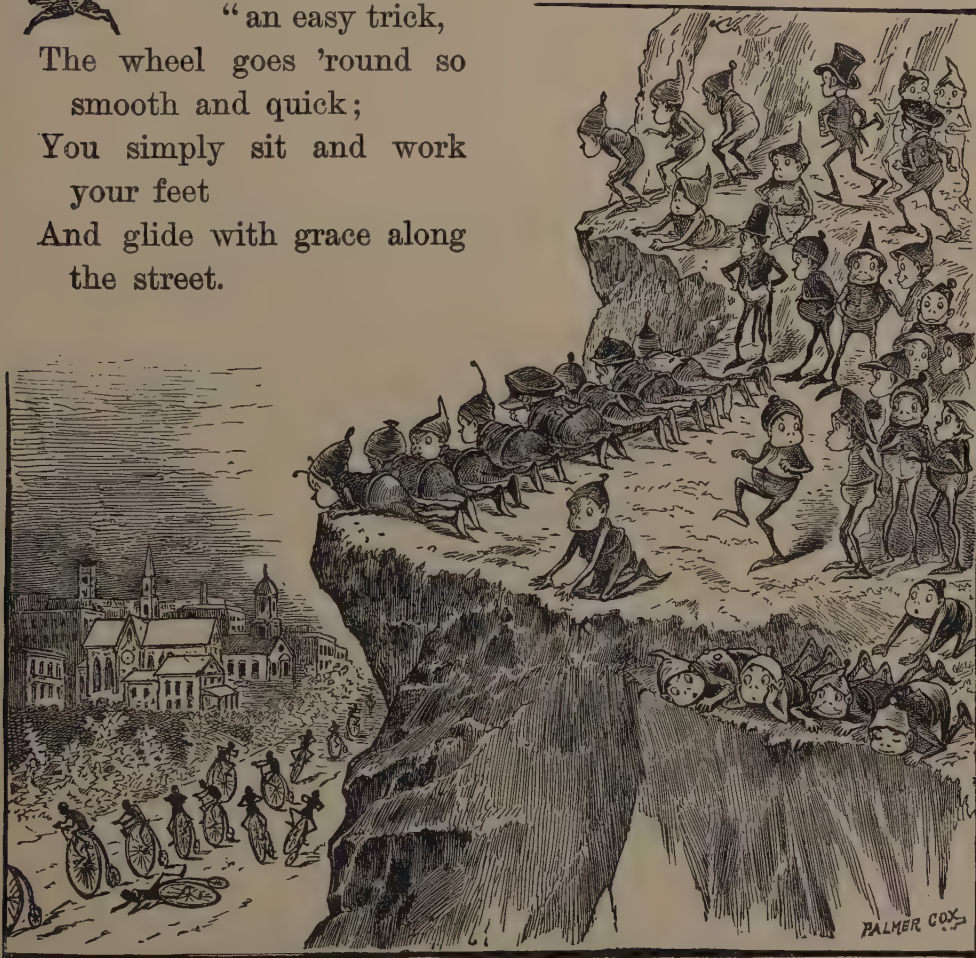
# THE BROWNIES ON BICYCLES.



ONE evening Brownies, peeping down  
From bluffs that overlooked the town,  
Saw wheelmen passing to and fro  
Upon the boulevard below.

"It seems," said one,  
"an easy trick,

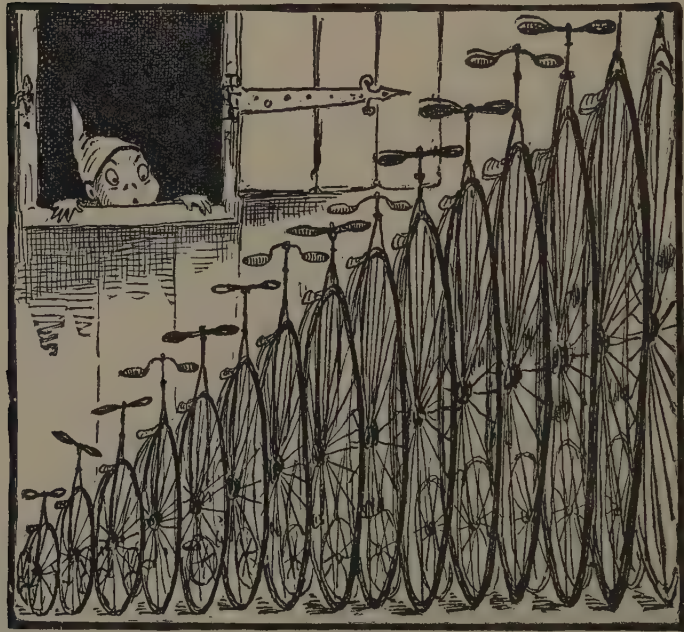
The wheel goes 'round so  
smooth and quick;  
You simply sit and work  
your feet  
And glide with grace along  
the street.



The pleasure would be fine indeed  
If *we* could thus in line proceed."

"Last night," another answer made,  
"As by the river's bank I strayed,  
Where here and there a building stands,  
And town and country-side join hands,  
Before me stood a massive wall  
With engine-rooms and chimneys tall.

"To scale the place a way I found,  
And, creeping in, looked all around;



There bicycles of every grade  
Are manufactured for the trade;  
Some made for baby hands to guide,  
And some for older folk to ride.

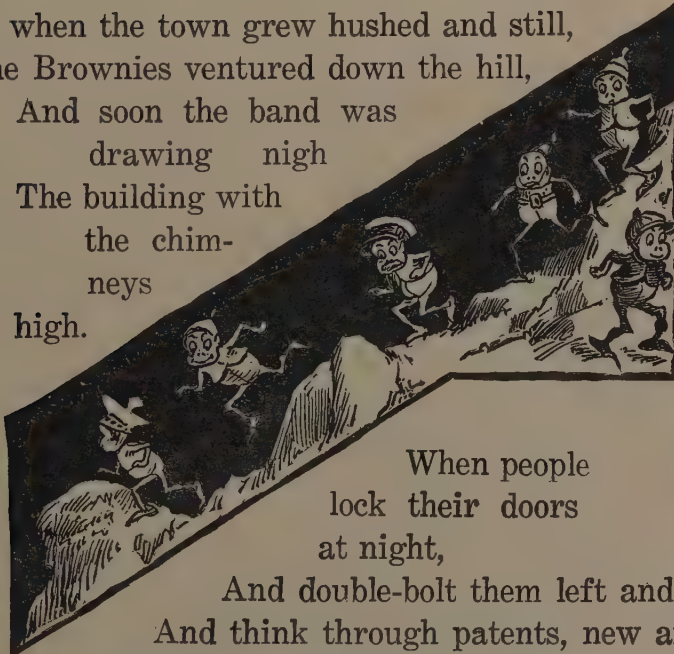


“Though built to keep intruders out,  
With shutters thick and casings stout,  
I noticed twenty ways or more,  
By roof, by window, wall and door,  
Where we, by exercising skill,  
May travel in and out at will.”

Another spoke, in nowise slow  
To catch at pleasures as they go,  
And said, “Why let another day  
Come creeping in to drag away?

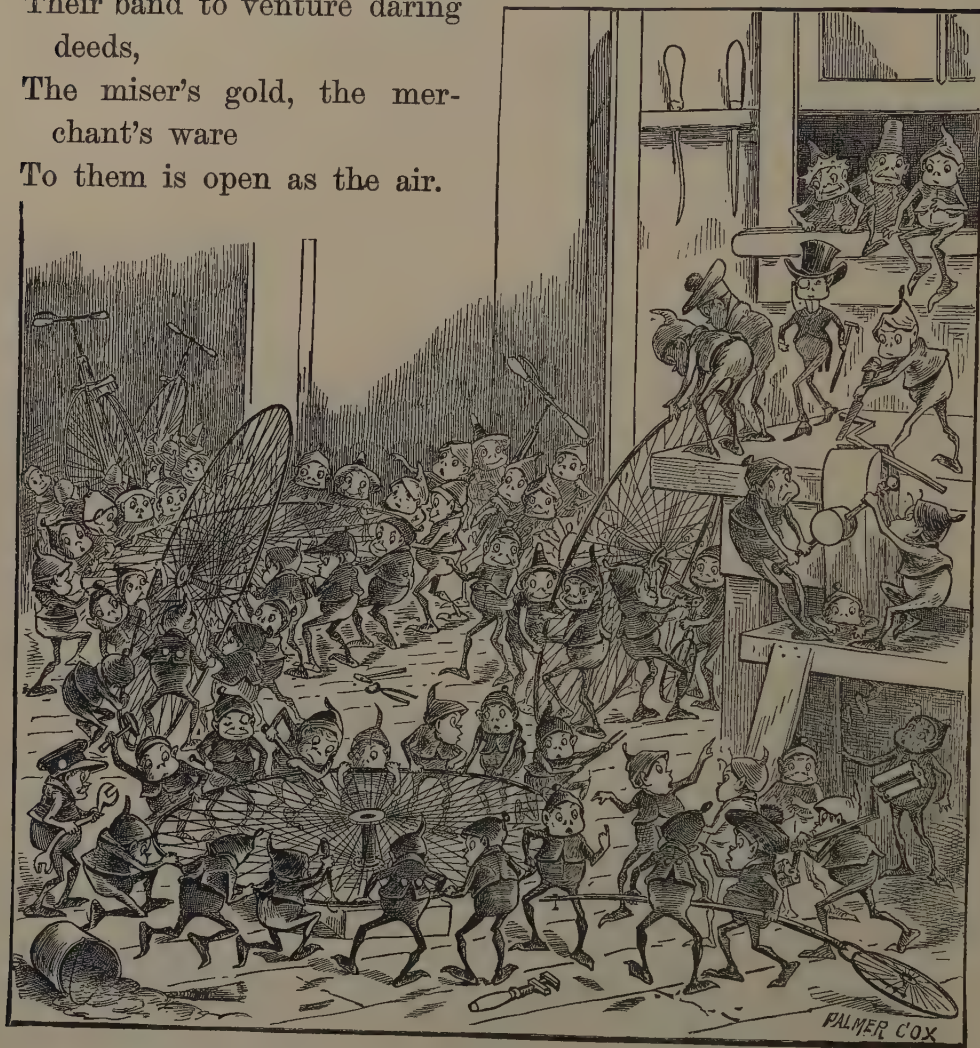
Let's active measures now employ  
To seize at once the promised joy.  
On bicycles quick let us ride,  
While yet our wants may be supplied.”

So when the town grew hushed and still,  
The Brownies ventured down the hill,  
And soon the band was  
drawing nigh  
The building with  
the chim-  
neys  
high.



When people  
lock their doors  
at night,  
And double-bolt them left and right,  
And think through patents, new and old,  
To leave the burglars in the cold,

The cunning Brownies smile to see  
 The springing bolt and turning key;  
 For well they know if fancy leads  
 Their band to venture daring  
 deeds,  
 The miser's gold, the mer-  
 chant's ware  
 To them is open as the air.



Not long could door or windows stand  
 Fast locked before the Brownie band;  
 And soon the bicycles they sought  
 From every room and bench were brought.

The rogues ere long began to show  
As many colors as the bow;  
For paint and varnish lately spread  
Besmeared them all from foot to head.  
Some turned to jay-birds in a minute,  
And some as quick might shame the linnet;  
While more with crimson-tinted breast  
Seemed fitted for the robin's nest.

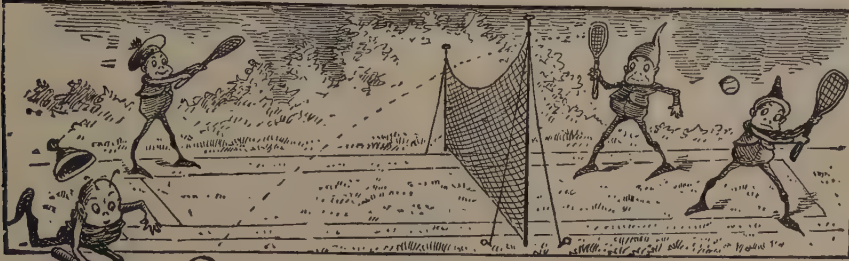
But whether red or green or blue,  
The work on hand was hurried through;  
They took the wheels from blacksmith fires,  
Though wanting bolts and even tires,  
And rigged the parts with skill and speed  
To answer well their pressing need.  
And soon, enough were made complete  
To give the greater part a seat,  
And let the rest through cunning find  
Some way of hanging on behind.  
And then no spurt along the road,  
Or 'round the yard their courage showed,  
But twenty times a measured mile  
They whirled away in single file,  
Or bunched together in a crowd  
If width of road or skill allowed.  
At times, while rolling down the grade,  
Collisions some confusion made,  
For every member of the band,  
At steering wished to try his hand;  
'Though some, perhaps, were not designed  
For labor of that special kind.



But Brownies are the folk to bear  
Misfortunes with unruffled air;  
So on through rough and smooth they spun  
Until the turning-point was won.  
Then back they wheeled with every spoke,  
An hour before the thrush awoke.



# THE BROWNIES AT LAWN-TENNIS.

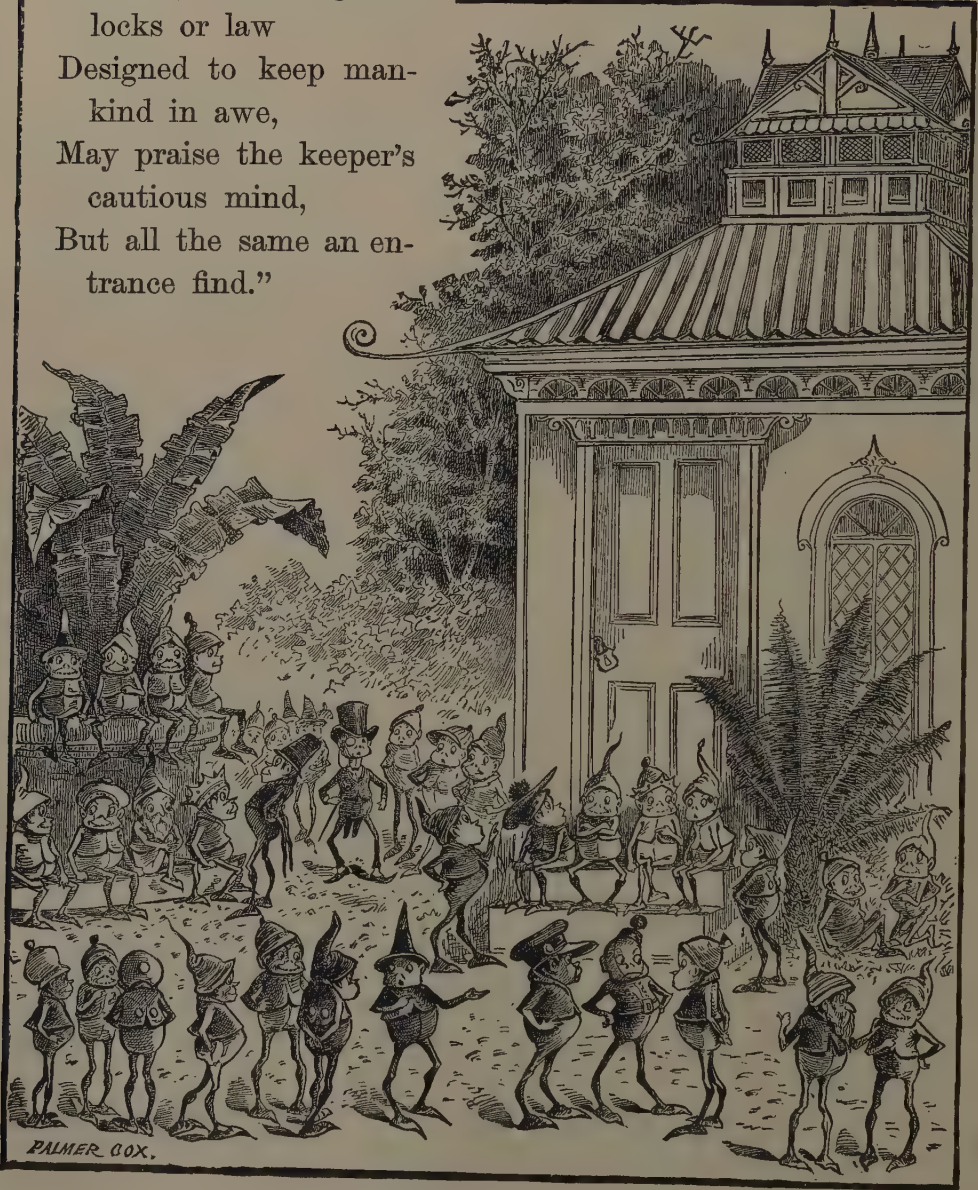


ONE evening as the woods grew dark,  
The Brownies wandered through a park  
And soon a building, quaint and small,  
Appeared to draw the gaze of all.  
Said one: "This place contains, no doubt,  
The tools of workmen hereabout."  
Another said: "You're quite astray,  
The workmen's tools are miles away;  
Within this building may be found  
The fixtures for the tennis ground.  
A meadow near, both long and wide,  
For half the year is set aside,  
And marked with many a square and court,  
For those who love the royal sport.  
On afternoons assembled there,  
The active men and maidens fair  
Keep up the game until the day  
Has faded into evening gray."  
"In other lands than those we tread,  
I played the game," another said,  
"And proved my skill and muscle stout,  
As 'server' and as 'striker-out.'"

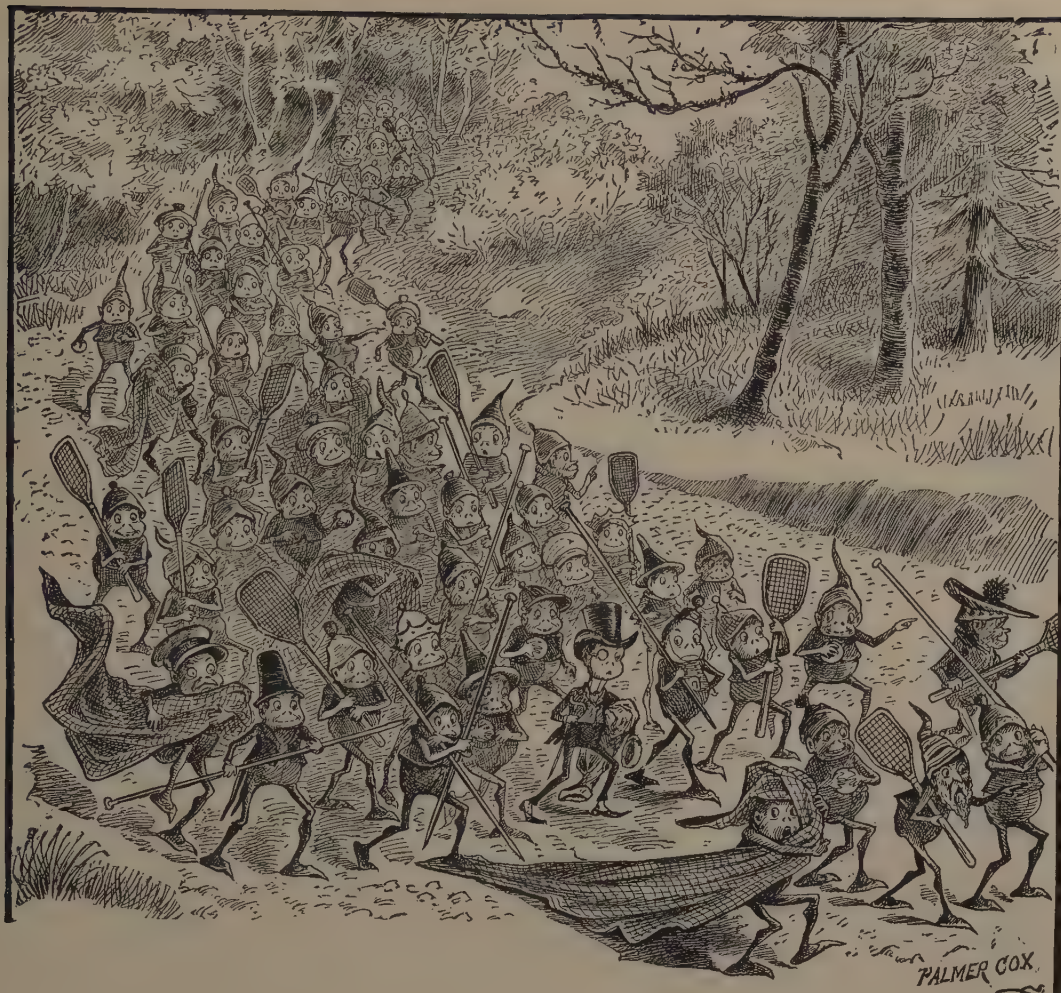


The lock that hangs before us there  
Bears witness to the keeper's care,  
And tramps or burglars might go by,  
If such a sign should meet the eye.

But we, who laugh at  
locks or law  
Designed to keep man-  
kind in awe,  
May praise the keeper's  
cautious mind,  
But all the same an en-  
trance find."







Ere long, the path that lay between  
The building and the meadow green,  
Was crowded with the bustling throng,  
All bearing implements along;  
Some lugging stakes or racket sets,  
And others buried up in nets.  
To set the posts and mark the ground  
The proper size and shape around,

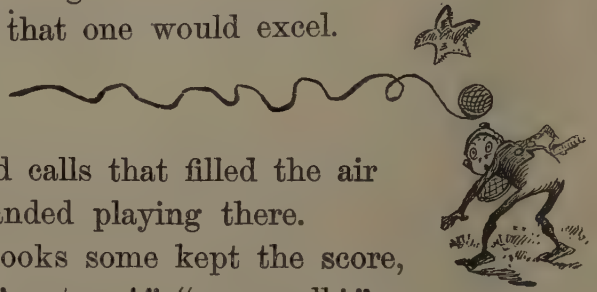
With service-line and line of base,  
And courts, both left and right, in place,  
Was work that caused but slight delay;  
And soon the sport was under way.  
And then a strange and stirring scene  
Was pictured out upon the green.



Some watched the game and noted well  
Where this or that one would excel.



And shouts and calls that filled the air  
Proved even-handed playing there.  
With anxious looks some kept the score,  
And shouted "vantage!" "game all!" or  
To some, "love, forty!"—"deuce!" to more.  
But when "deuce set!" the scorer cried,  
Applause would ring on every side.  
At times so hot the contest grew,  
Established laws aside they threw,  
And in the game where four should stand,  
At least a dozen took a hand.  
Some tangled in the netting lay  
And some from base-lines strayed away.  
Some hit the ball when out of place  
Or scrambled through unlawful space.  
But still no game was forced to halt  
Because of this or greater fault.







And there they sported on the lawn  
Until the ruddy streaks of dawn  
Gave warning that the day was near,  
And Brownies all must disappear.



## THE BROWNIES' GOOD WORK.

ONE time, while Brownies passed around  
An honest farmer's piece of ground,  
They paused to view the garden fair  
And fields of grain that needed care.  
"My friends," said one who often spoke  
About the ways of human folk,



"Now here 's a case in point, I claim,  
Where neighbors scarce deserve the name:  
This farmer on his back is laid  
With broken ribs and shoulder-blade,  
Received, I hear, some weeks ago;  
While at the village here below,

He checked a  
running team,  
to save  
Some children  
from an early  
grave.

Now overripe  
his harvest  
stands

In waiting for  
the reaper's  
hands;

The piece of  
wheat we  
lately passed  
Is shelling out  
at every blast;





Those pumpkins in that corner plot  
 Begin to show the signs of rot;  
 The mold has fastened on their skin,  
 The ripest ones are caving in,  
 And soon the pig in yonder sty  
 With scornful grunt would pass  
 them by.



His Early Rose potatoes there  
 Are much in need of light and air;  
 The turnip withers where it lies,  
 The beet and carrot want to rise.  
 'Oh, pull us up!' they seem to cry  
 To every one that passes by;  
 'The frost will finish our repose,  
 The grubs are working at our toes;

Unless you come  
 We'll not be worth  
 The corn is breaking  
 The hens around the  
 And with their ever  
 May pick the ker-  
 His neighbors are a  
 Who've such a



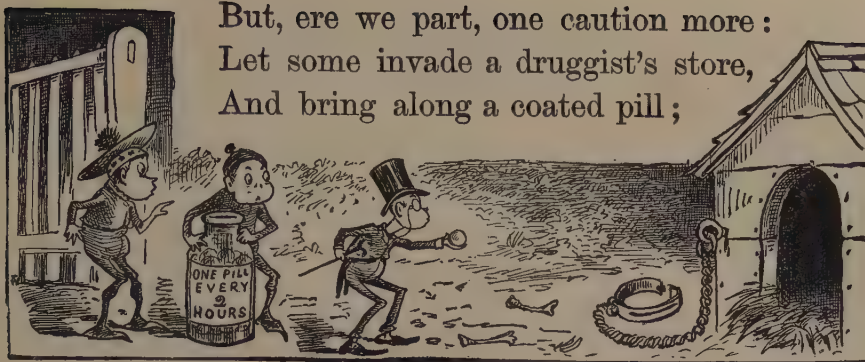
and save us soon,  
 a picayune!  
 from the stalk,  
 hill can walk,  
 ready bill  
 nels at their will.  
 sordid crowd,  
 shameful waste allowed

So wrapped in self some men can be,  
 Beyond their purse they seldom see;  
 'T is left for us to play the friend  
 And here a helping hand extend.  
 But as the wakeful chanticleer  
 Is crowing in the stable near,  
 Too little of the present night  
 Is left to set the matter right.

"To-morrow eve, at that dark hour  
When birds grow still in leafy bower  
And bats forsake the ruined pile  
To exercise their wings awhile,  
In yonder shady grove we'll meet,  
With all our active force complete,  
Prepared to give this farmer aid  
With basket, barrel, hook, and spade.







But, ere we part, one caution more :  
Let some invade a druggist's store,  
And bring along a coated pill ;

We'll dose the dog to keep him still.  
For barking dogs, however kind,  
Can oft disturb a Brownie's mind."  
—When next the bat of evening flew,  
And drowsy things of day withdrew,  
When beetles droned across the lea,  
And turkeys sought the safest tree  
To form aloft a social row  
And criticise the fox below,—  
Then cunning Brownies might be seen  
Advancing from the forest green ;  
Now jumping fences, as they ran,  
Now crawling through (a safer plan) ;  
Now keeping to the roads awhile,  
Now "cutting corners," country style ;  
Some bearing hoes, and baskets more,  
Some pushing barrows on before,  
While others, swinging sickles bright,  
Seemed eager for the grain in sight.  
But in advance of all the throng  
Three daring Brownies moved along,  
Whose duty was to venture close  
And give the barking dog his dose.

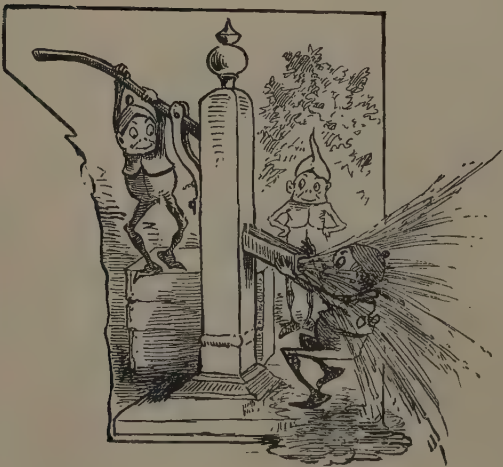


Now soon the work was under way,  
 Each chose the part he was to play :  
 While some who handled hoes the best  
 Brought "Early Roses" from their nest,  
 To turnip-tops some laid their hands,  
 More plied the hook, or twisted bands.  
 And soon the sheaves lay piled around,  
 Like heroes on disputed ground.

Now let the eye turn where it might,  
 A pleasing prospect was in sight ;  
 For garden ground or larger field  
 Alike a busy crowd revealed :  
 Some pulling carrots from their bed,  
 Some bearing burdens on their head,  
 Or working at a fever heat  
 While prying out a monster beet.  
 Now here two heavy loads have met,  
 And there a barrow has upset,



While workers every effort strain  
 The rolling pumpkins to regain ;



And long before the stars with-  
 drew,  
 The crop was safe, the work  
 was through.  
 In shocks the corn, secure and  
 good,  
 Now like a Sioux encampment  
 stood ;  
 The wheat was safely stowed  
 away ;  
 In bins the "Early Roses"  
 lay,



While carrots, tur-  
nips, beets, and all  
Received attention,  
great and small.  
When morning dawn-  
ed, no sight or sound  
Of friendly Brownies  
could be found;  
And when at last old  
Towser broke  
The spell, and from  
his slumber woke,  
He rushed around, be-  
lieving still  
Some mischief lay be-  
hind the pill.  
But though the fields  
looked bare and  
strange,  
His mind could hardly  
grasp the change.  
And when the farmer  
learned at morn

That safe from harm were wheat and corn,  
That all his barley, oats, and rye  
Were in the barn, secure and dry,  
That carrots, beets, and turnips round  
Were safely taken from the ground,  
The honest farmer thought, of course,  
His neighbors had turned out in force  
While helpless on the bed he lay,  
And kindly stowed his crop away.







But when he thanked them for their aid,  
And hoped they yet might be repaid  
For acting such a friendly part,  
His words appeared to pierce each heart;  
For well they knew that other hands  
Than theirs had laid his grain in bands,  
That other backs had bent in toil  
To save the products of the soil.  
And then they felt as such folk will  
Who fail to nobly act, until  
More earnest helpers, stepping in,  
Do all the praise and honor win.

## THE BROWNIES AT THE GYMNASIUM.



THE Brownies once, while roaming 'round,  
By chance approached a college ground;  
And, as they skirmished every side,  
A large gymnasium they espied.  
Their eyes grew bright as they surveyed  
The means for exercise displayed.

The club, the weight, the hanging ring,  
The horizontal bar, and swing,

The boxing-gloves  
Of him who loves  
All brought expres-  
As one by one they  
The time was short,  
That named the



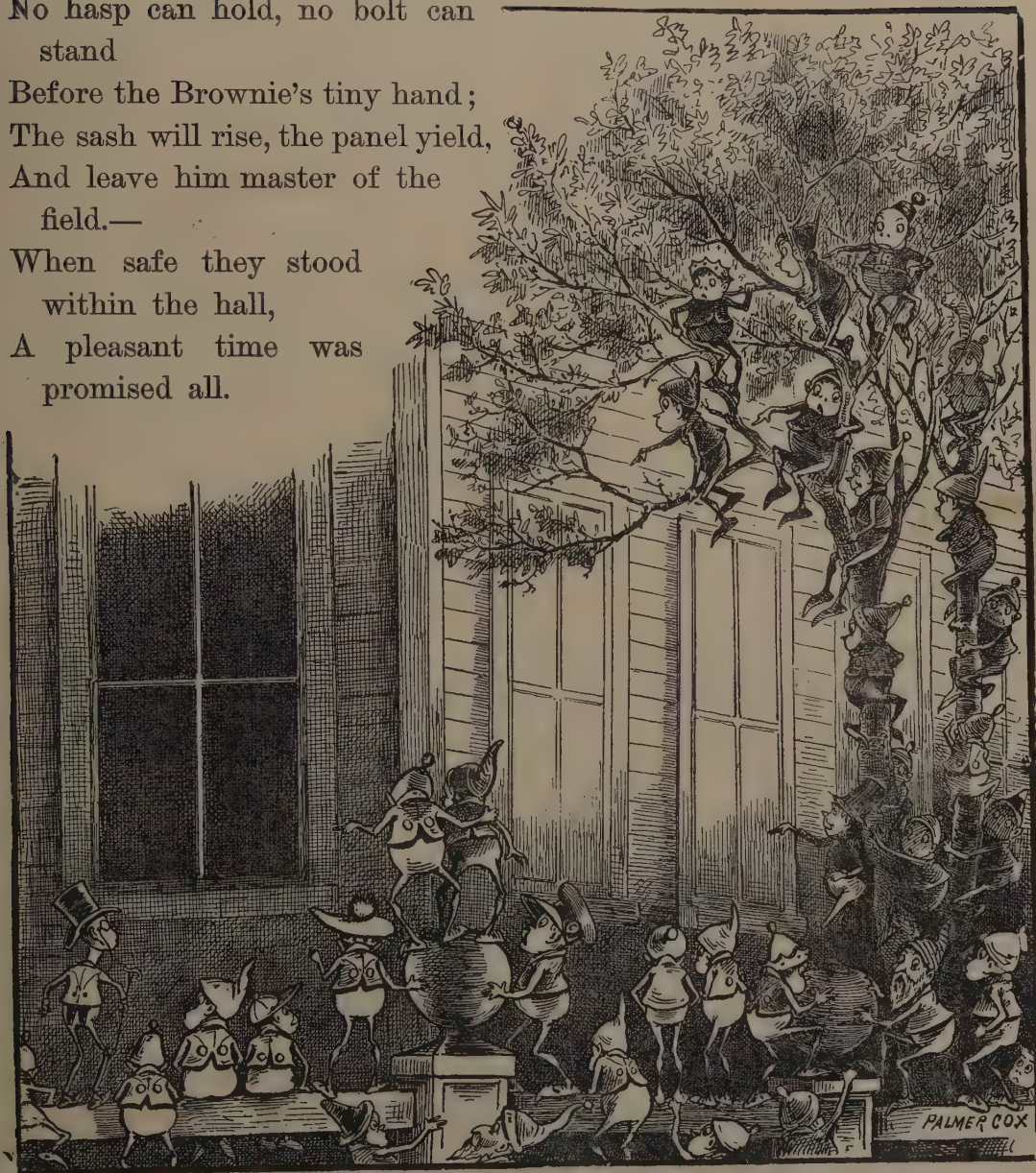
that please the heart  
the manly art,  
sions of delight,  
came in sight.  
and words were few  
work for each to do.

Their mystic art, as may be found  
On pages now in volumes bound,  
Was quite enough to bear them in  
Through walls of wood and roofs of tin.

No hasp can hold, no bolt can  
stand

Before the Brownie's tiny hand;  
The sash will rise, the panel yield,  
And leave him master of the  
field.—

When safe they stood  
within the hall,  
A pleasant time was  
promised all.



Said one: "The clubs let me obtain  
 That Indians use upon the plain,  
 And here I'll stand to test my power,  
 And swing them 'round my head an hour;  
 Though not the largest in the band,  
 I claim to own no infant hand;  
 And muscle in this arm you'll meet  
 That well might grace a trained athlete.



Two goats once blocked a mountain pass,  
 Contending o'er a tuft of grass.  
 Important messages of state  
 Forbade me there to stand and wait;  
 Without a pause, the pair I neared  
 And seized the larger by the beard;  
 I dragged him from his panting foe  
 And hurled him to the plain below."

"For clubs," a second answered there,  
 "Or heavy weights I little care;  
 Let those by generous nature planned  
 At heavy lifting try their hand;  
 But give me bar or give me ring,  
 Where I can turn, contort,  
 and swing,  
 And I'll outdo, with movements fine,  
 The monkey on his tropic vine."



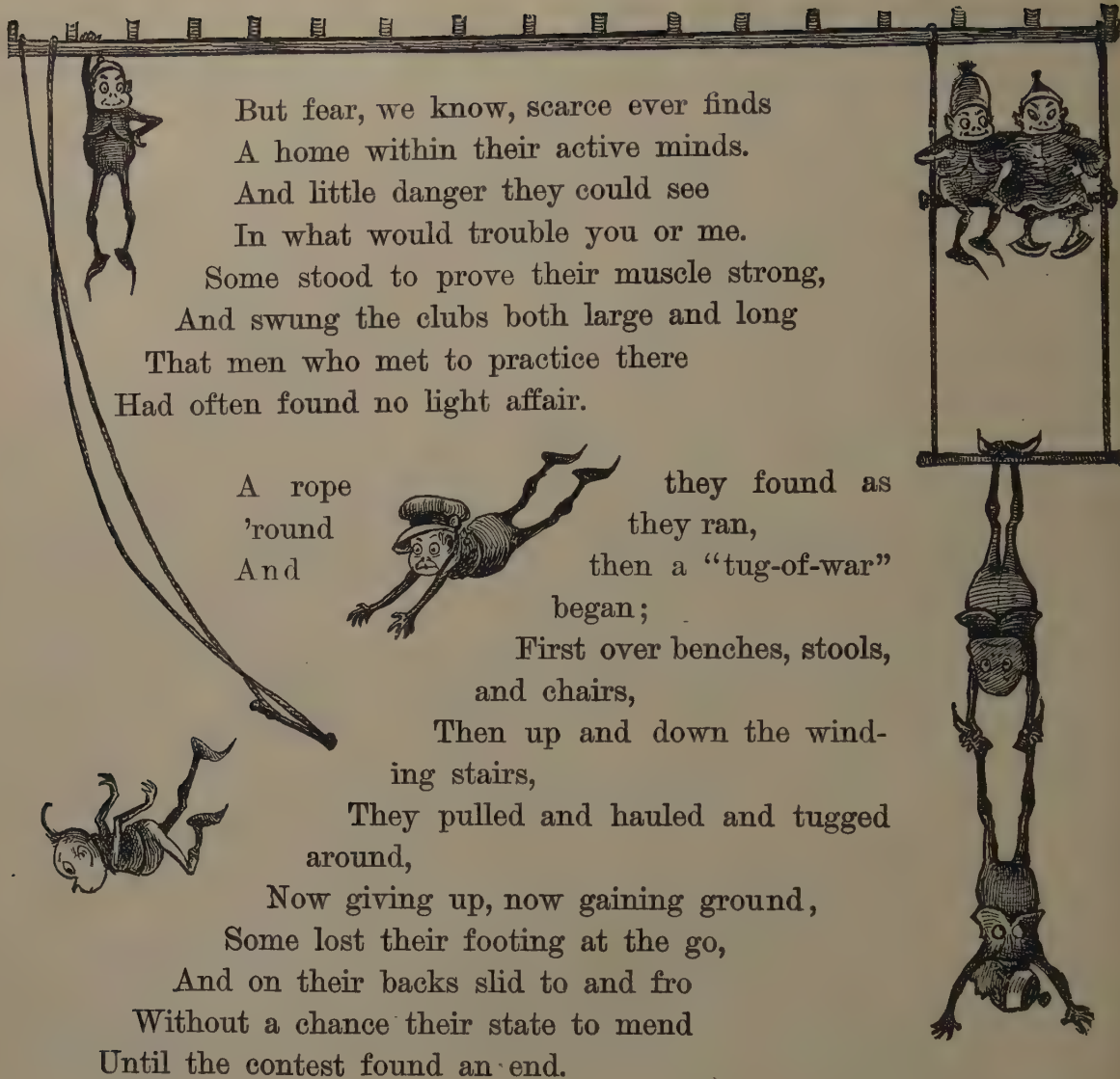




Thus skill and strength and wind they tried  
By means they found on every side.

Some claimed at once the high trapeze,  
And there performed with grace and ease;  
They turned and tumbled left and right,  
As though they held existence light.  
At times a finger-tip was all  
Between them and a fearful fall.  
On strength of toes they now depend,  
Or now on coat-tails of a friend—  
And had that cloth been less than best  
That looms could furnish, east or west,  
Some members of the Brownie race  
Might now be missing from their place





But fear, we know, scarce ever finds  
A home within their active minds.  
And little danger they could see  
In what would trouble you or me.

Some stood to prove their muscle strong,  
And swung the clubs both large and long  
That men who met to practice there  
Had often found no light affair.

A rope  
'round  
And



they found as  
they ran,  
then a "tug-of-war"  
began;

First over benches, stools,  
and chairs,

Then up and down the wind-  
ing stairs,

They pulled and hauled and tugged  
around,

Now giving up, now gaining ground,

Some lost their footing at the go,

And on their backs slid to and fro

Without a chance their state to mend

Until the contest found an end.



Their coats from tail to collar rent  
Showed some through trying treatment went,  
And more, with usage much the same,  
All twisted out of shape, and lame,  
Had scarce a button to their name.

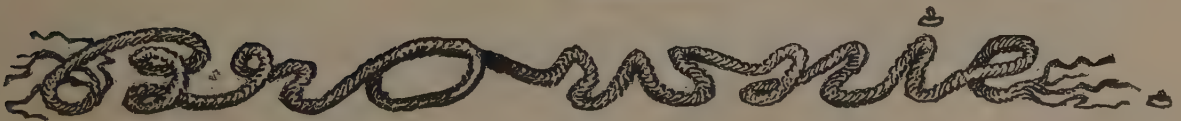


The judge selected for the case  
 Ran here and there about the place  
 With warning cries and gesture wide,  
 And seemed unable to decide.

And there they might be tug-  
 ging still,  
 With equal strength and equal  
 will—  
 But while they struggled, stars  
 withdrew  
 And hints of morning broader  
 grew,  
 Till arrows from the rising sun  
 Soon made them drop the rope  
 and run.



PALMER COX







## THE BROWNIES' FEAST.



IN best of spirits, blithe and free,—  
 As Brownies always seem to be,—  
 A jovial band, with hop and leap,  
 Were passing through a forest deep,  
 When in an open space they spied  
 A heavy caldron, large and wide,  
 Where woodmen, working at their trade,  
 A rustic boiling-place had made.  
 "My friends," said one, "a chance like this  
 No cunning Brownie band should miss,  
 All unobserved, we may prepare  
 And boil a pudding nicely there;



Some dying embers smolder still  
 Which we may soon revive at will;  
 And by the roots of yonder tree  
 A brook goes babbling to the sea.  
 At Parker's mill, some miles below,  
 They're grinding flour as white as snow:  
 An easy task for us to bear  
 Enough to serve our need from there:

I noticed, as I passed to-night,  
A window with a broken light,  
And through the opening we'll pour  
Though bolts and bars be on the door."

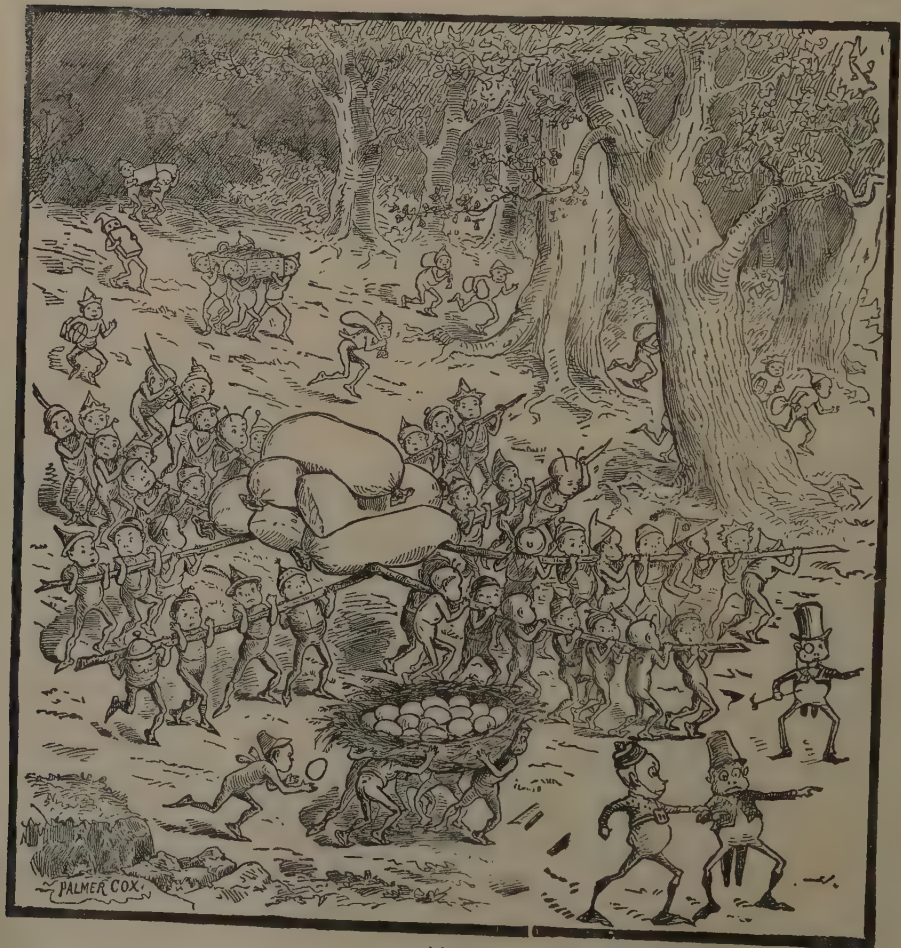
"And I," another Brownie cried,  
"Will find the plums and currants dried;  
I'll have some here in half an hour  
To sprinkle thickly through the flour;  
So stir yourselves, and bear in mind  
That some must spice and sugar find."  
"I know," cried one, "where hens have made  
Their nest beneath the burdock shade—  
I saw them stealing out with care  
To lay their eggs in secret there.

The farmer's wife, through sun and rain,  
Has sought to find that nest in vain:  
They cackle by the wall of stones,

The hollow stump and pile of bones,  
And by the ditch that lies below,  
Where yellow weeds and nettles grow;  
And draw her after everywhere  
Until she quits them in despair.  
The task be mine to thither lead  
A band of comrades now with speed,  
To help me bear a tender load  
Along the rough and rugged road."  
Away, away, on every side,  
At once the lively Brownies glide;  
Some after plums, more 'round the hill—  
The shortest way to reach the mill—  
While some on wings and some on legs  
Go darting off to find the eggs.



A few remained upon the spot  
To build a fire beneath the pot;  
Some gathered bark from trunks of trees,  
While others, on their hands and knees,  
Around the embers puffed and blew  
Until the sparks to blazes grew;  
And scarcely was the kindling burned  
Before the absent ones returned.  
All loaded down they came, in groups,  
In couples, singly, and in troops.





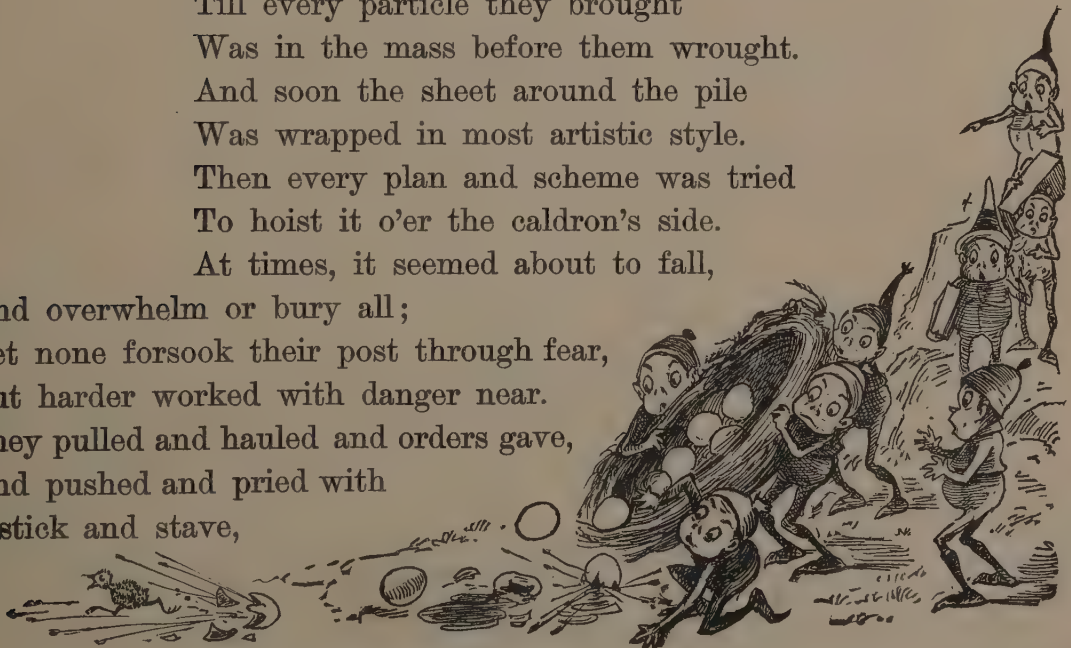
Upon their shoulders, heads, and backs  
 They bore along the floury sacks;  
 With plums and currants others came,  
 Each bag and basket filled the same;

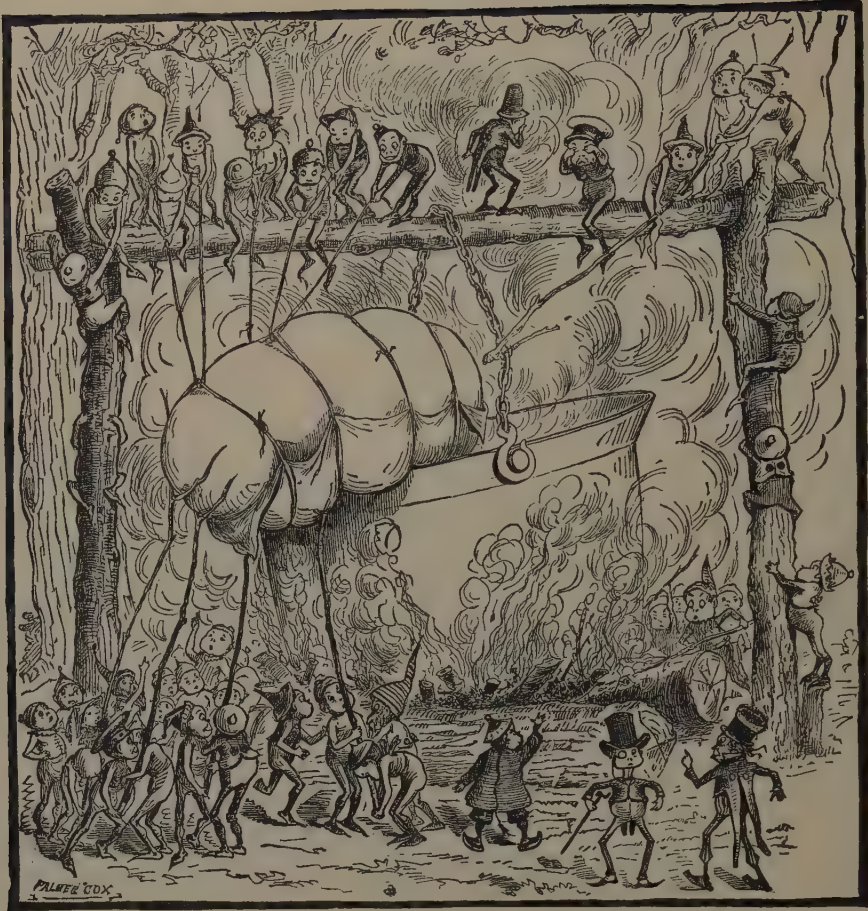


While those who gave  
 the hens a call  
 Had taken nest-egg,  
 nest, and all;  
 And more, a pressing  
 want to meet,

From some one's line had hauled a sheet,  
 The monstrous pudding to infold  
 While in the boiling pot it rolled.  
 The rogues were flour from head to feet  
 Before the mixture was complete.  
 Like snow-birds in a drift of snow  
 They worked and elbowed in the dough,  
 Till every particle they brought  
 Was in the mass before them wrought.  
 And soon the sheet around the pile  
 Was wrapped in most artistic style.  
 Then every plan and scheme was tried  
 To hoist it o'er the caldron's side.  
 At times, it seemed about to fall,

And overwhelm or bury all;  
 Yet none forsook their post through fear,  
 But harder worked with danger near.  
 They pulled and hauled and orders gave,  
 And pushed and pried with  
 stick and stave,





Until, in spite of height and heat,  
 They had performed the trying feat.  
 To take the pudding from the pot  
 They might have found as hard and hot.  
 But water on the fire they threw,  
 And then to work again they flew.  
 And soon the steaming treasure sat  
 Upon a stone both broad and flat,  
 Which answered for a table grand,  
 When nothing better was at hand.



Some think that Brownies never eat,  
 But live on odors soft and sweet,  
 That through the verdant woods proceed  
 Or steal across the dewy mead;  
 But those who could have gained a sight  
 Of them, around their pudding white,  
 Would have perceived that elves of air  
 Can relish more substantial fare.



They clustered close, and delved and ate  
 Without a knife, a spoon, or plate;  
 Some picking out the plums with care,  
 And leaving all the pastry there.  
 While some let plums and currants go,  
 But paid attention to the dough.  
 The purpose of each Brownie's mind  
 Was not to leave a crumb behind,  
 That, when the morning sun should shine  
 Through leafy tree and clinging vine,



No traces of their sumptuous feast

It might reveal to  
 And well they gauged  
 When they their  
 For when the rich  
 The rogues could  
 —The miller never  
 For Brownies wield a



man or beast;  
 what all could bear,  
 pudding did prepare;  
 repast was done,  
 neither fly nor run.  
 missed his flour,  
 mystic power;

Whate'er they take they can restore  
 In greater plenty than before.

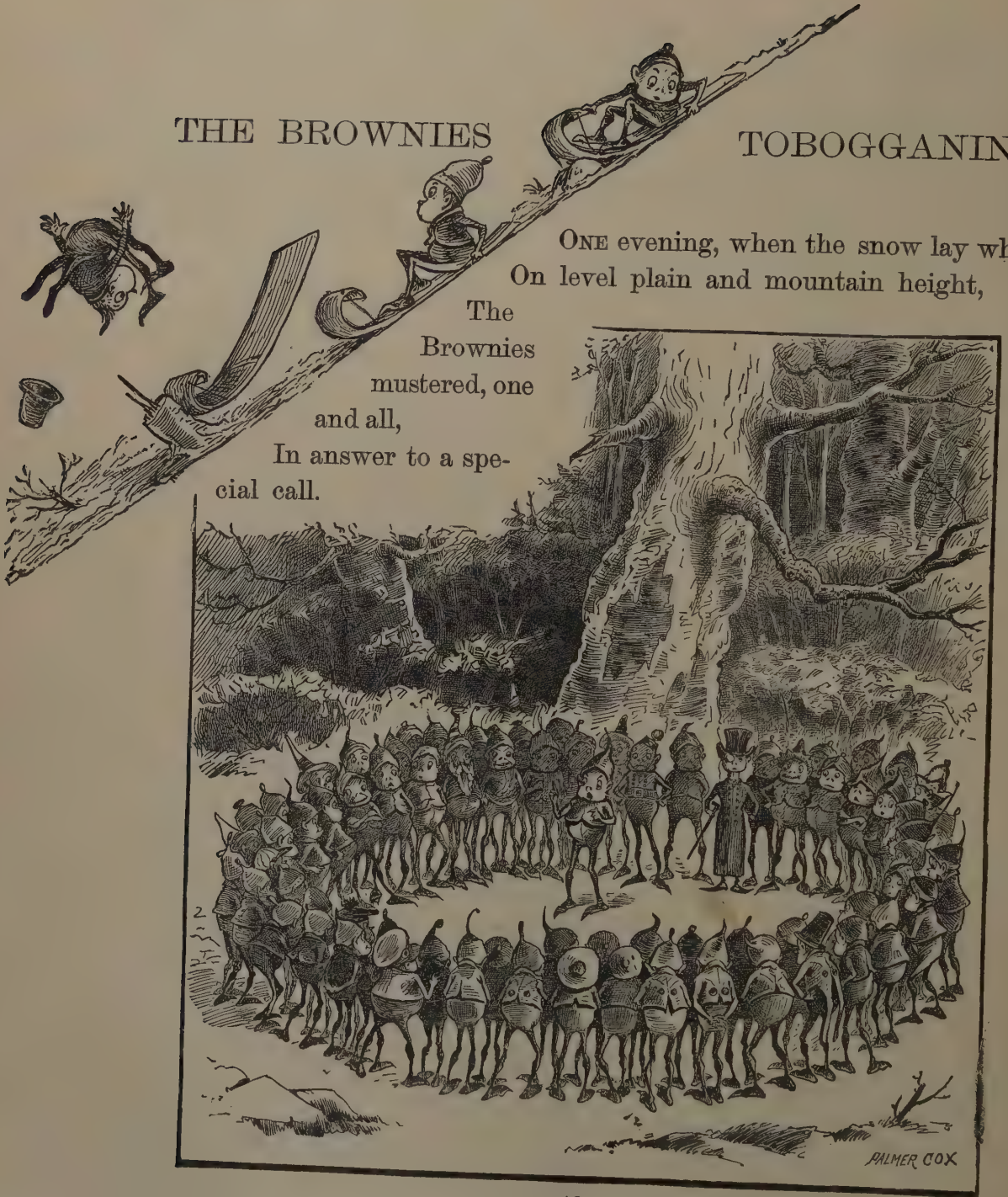


# THE BROWNIES

# TOBOGGANING

ONE evening, when the snow lay white  
On level plain and mountain height,

The  
Brownies  
mustered, one  
and all,  
In answer to a spe-  
cial call.





All clustered in a ring they stood  
Within the shelter of the wood,  
While earnest faces brighter grew  
At thought of enterprises new.

Said one, "It seems that all the rage,  
With human kind of every age,  
Is on toboggans swift to slide  
Down steepest hill or mountain side.

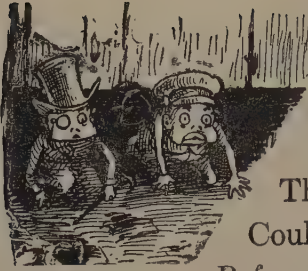
Our plans at once we must prepare,  
And try, ourselves, that pleasure rare.  
We might enough toboggans find  
In town, perhaps, of every kind,  
If some one chanced to know where they  
Awaiting sale are stowed away."

Another spoke: "Within us lies  
The power to make our own supplies;  
We'll not depend on other hands  
To satisfy these new demands;  
The merchants' wares we'll let alone  
And make toboggans of our own;  
A lumber-yard some miles from here  
Holds seasoned lumber all the year.  
There pine and cedar may be found,

And oak and ash are piled around.  
Some boards are thick and some are  
thin,  
But all will bend like sheets of tin.  
At once we'll hasten to the spot,  
And, though a fence surrounds the lot,  
We'll skirmish 'round and persevere,  
And gain an entrance,—never fear."







This brought a smile to every face,  
For Brownies love to climb and race,  
And undertake such work as will  
Bring into play their wondrous skill.

The pointers on the dial plate  
Could hardly mark a later date,  
Before they scampered o'er the miles  
That brought them to the lumber piles,  
And then they clambered, crept, and squeezed,  
And gained admittance where they pleased;

For other ways than builders show  
To scale a wall the Brownies know.

Some sought for birch, and some for pine,  
And some for cedar, soft and fine.  
With free selection well content  
Soon under heavy loads they bent.

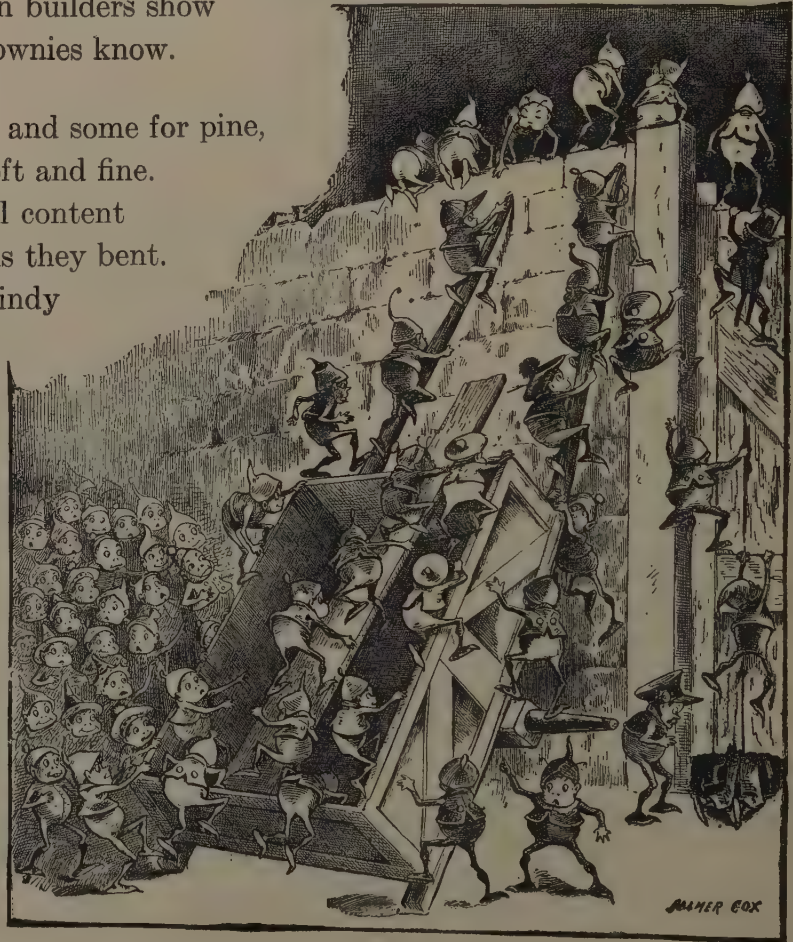
It chanced to be a windy  
night,

Which made their  
labor far from  
light,

But, though a heavy  
tax was laid  
On strength and  
patience, undis-  
mayed

They worked their  
way by hook or  
crook,

And reached at last  
a sheltered nook;







Then lively work the crowd  
began  
To make toboggans true to  
plan.

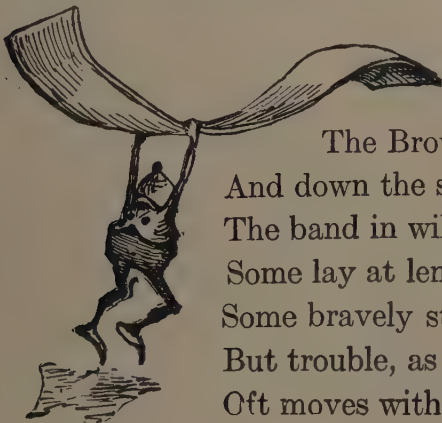
The force was large, the rogues had skill,  
And hands were willing—better still;  
So here a twist, and there a bend,  
Soon brought their labors to an end.

Without the aid of steam or glue,  
They curved them like a war  
canoe;  
No little forethought some dis-  
played,  
But wisely “double-enders”  
made,  
That should they turn, as turn  
they might,  
They’d keep the downward  
course aright;  
They fashioned some for three  
or four,  
And some to carry eight or more,



While some were made to take a crowd  
And room for half the band allowed.  
Before the middle watch of night,

The Brownies sought the mountain height,  
And down the steepest grade it showed  
The band in wild procession rode;  
Some lay at length, some found a seat;  
Some bravely stood on bracing feet.  
But trouble, as you understand,  
Oft moves with pleasure, hand in hand,



And even Brownies were not free  
From evil snag or stubborn tree  
That split toboggans like a quill,  
And scattered riders down the hill.



With pitch and toss and plunge they flew,—  
Some skimmed the drifts, some tunneled through;  
Then out across the frozen plain  
At dizzy speed they shot amain,

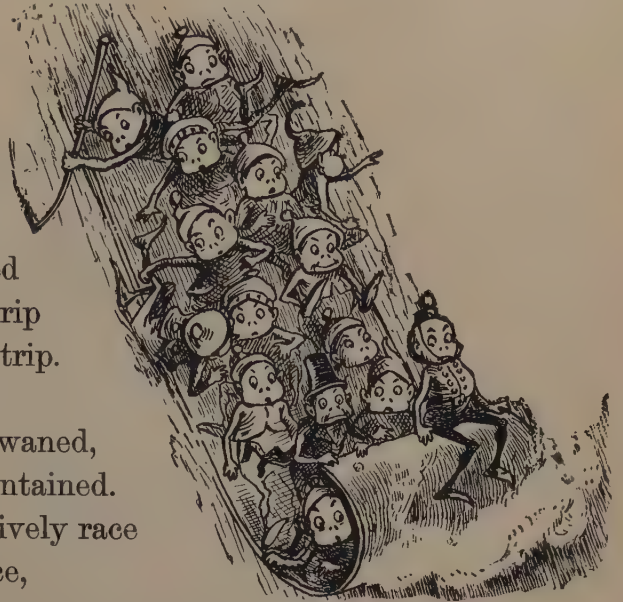




Through splintered rails and  
flying gates  
Of half a dozen large estates;  
Until it seemed that ocean wide

Alone  
could  
check the  
fearful ride.

Some, growing  
dizzy with the speed,  
At times a friendly hand would need  
To help them keep their proper grip  
Through all the dangers of the trip.



And thus until the stars had waned,  
The sport of coasting was maintained.  
Then, while they sought with lively race  
In deeper woods a hiding-place,  
"How strange," said one, "we never tried  
Till now the wild toboggan ride!

But since we've proved the pleasure  
fine

That's found upon the steep incline,  
We'll often muster on the height,  
And make the most of every night,  
Until the rains of spring descend  
And bring such pleasures to an  
end."

Another answered frank and free:  
"In all such musters count on me;  
For though my back is badly strained,  
My elbow-joint and ankle sprained,





I 'll be the first upon the  
ground  
As long as patch of snow  
is found,  
And bravely do my part  
to steer  
Toboggans on their wild  
career."

So every evening, foul  
or fair,  
The jovial Brownies  
gathered there,  
Till with the days of  
Spring, at last,  
Came drenching shower  
and melting blast,  
Which sent the mountain's  
ice and snow  
To fill the rivers miles  
below.



## THE BROWNIES' BALLOON.



WHILE rambling through the forest shade,  
A sudden halt some Brownies made;  
For spread about on bush and ground  
An old balloon at rest they found,  
That while upon some flying trip  
Had given aeronauts the slip.  
And, falling here in foliage green,  
Through all the summer lay unseen.  
The Brownies gathered fast to stare  
Upon the monster lying there,





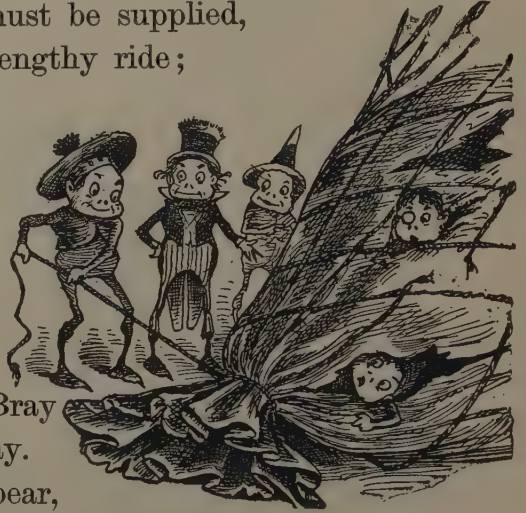
And when they learned the use and plan  
Of valves and ropes, the rogues began  
To lay their schemes and name a night  
When all could take an airy flight.  
“We want,” said one, “no tame affair,  
Like some that rise with heated air,  
And hardly clear the chimney-top  
Before they lose their life and drop.

The bag with gas must be supplied,  
That will insure a lengthy ride;

When we set sail 't is not to fly  
Above a spire and call it high.  
The boat, or basket, must be strong,  
Designed to take the crowd along;  
For that which leaves a part behind  
Would hardly suit the Brownie  
mind.

The works that serve the town of Bray  
With gas are scarce two miles away.  
To-morrow night we'll come and bear,

As best we can, this burden there;  
And when inflated, fit to rise,  
We'll take a sail around the skies.”



Next evening, as the scheme was planned,  
The Brownies promptly were on hand;  
For when some pleasure lies in view,  
The absentees are always few.  
But 't was no easy task to haul  
The old balloon, car, ropes and all,  
Across the rocks and fallen trees  
And through the marshes to their knees.



But Brownies, persevering still,  
Will keep their course through every ill,  
And in the main, as history shows,  
Succeed in aught they do propose.



So, though it cost them rather dear,  
In scratches there and tumbles here,  
They worked until the wondrous feat  
Of transportation was complete.

Then while some busy fingers played  
Around the rents that branches made,  
An extra coil of rope was tied  
In long festoons around the side,  
That all the party, young and old,  
Might find a trusty seat or hold.  
And while they worked, they chatted free  
About the wonders they would see.  
Said one: "As smoothly as a kite,  
We'll rise above the clouds to-night,  
And may the question settle soon,  
About the surface of the moon."  
Now all was ready for the gas,  
And soon the lank and tangled mass  
Began to flop about and rise,  
As though impatient for the skies;  
Then was there work for every hand  
That could be mustered in the band,  
To keep the growing monster low  
Until they stood prepared to go;  
To this and that they made it fast,  
Round stones and stakes the rope  
was cast;

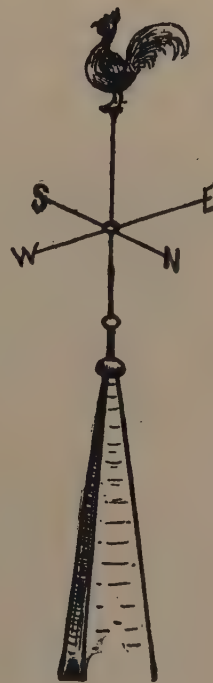




But strong it grew and stronger still,  
 As every wrinkle seemed to fill;  
 And when at last it bounded clear,  
 And started on its wild career,  
 A rooted stump and garden gate,  
 It carried off as special freight.

Though all the Brownies went, a part  
 Were not in proper shape to start;  
 Arrangements hardly were complete,  
 Some wanted room and more a seat,  
 While some in acrobatic style  
 Must put their trust in toes awhile.  
 But Brownies are not hard to please,  
 And soon they rested at their ease;  
 Some found support, both safe and strong,  
 Upon the gate that went along,  
 By some the stump was utilized,  
 And furnished seats they highly prized.

Now, as they rose they ran afoul  
 Of screaming hawk and hooting owl,  
 And flitting bats that hooked their wings  
 At once around the ropes and strings,

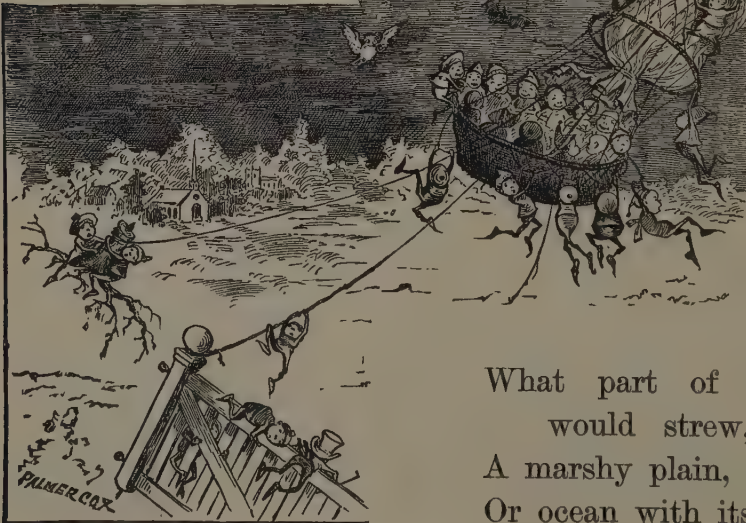




As though content to there abide  
 And take the chances of the ride.  
 On passing through a heavy cloud,  
 One thus addressed the moistened crowd:  
 "Although the earth, from which we rise,  
 Now many miles below us lies,  
 To sharpest eye, strain as it may,  
 The moon looks just as far away."  
 "The earth is good enough for me!"

Another said, "with  
 And shady groves, of  
 Will some one give the  
 And soon they all were  
 To start upon a

But once the gas  
 They lost the power  
 The more they tried  
 The more it seemed

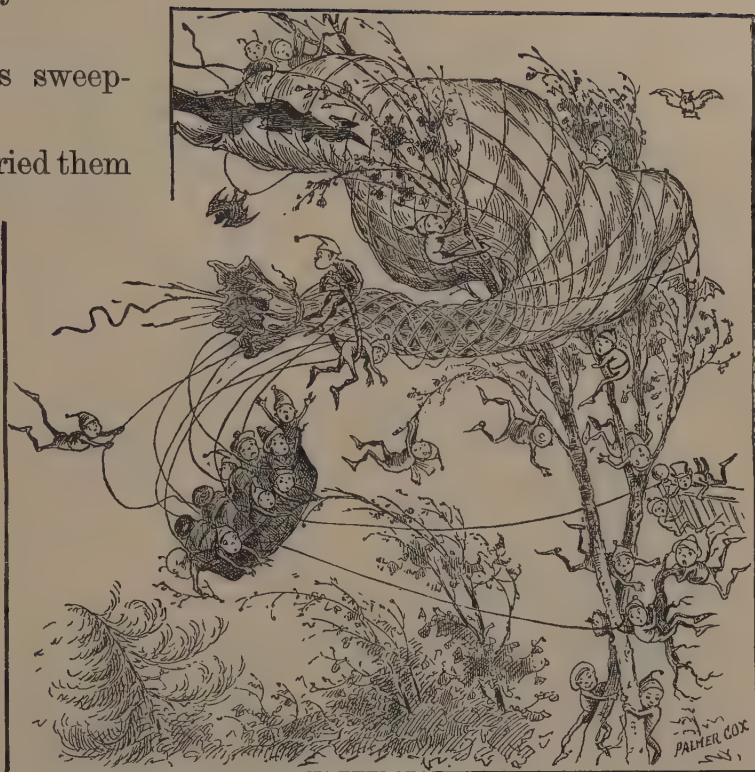


grassy lea,  
 songsters full.—  
 valve a pull?"  
 well content,  
 mild descent.

commenced to go,  
 to check the flow;  
 control to gain,  
 to rush amain.  
 Then some began  
 to wring their  
 hands,  
 And more to vol-  
 unteer com-  
 mands;  
 While some were  
 craning out to  
 view

What part of earth their wreck  
 would strew,  
 A marshy plain, a rocky shore,  
 Or ocean with its sullen roar.

It happened as they neared  
the ground,  
A rushing gale was sweep-  
ing round,  
That caught and carried them  
with speed  
Across the forest  
and the mead.  
Then lively catch-  
ing might be  
seen  
At cedar tops and  
branches green;  
While still the  
stump behind  
them swung,  
On this it caught,  
to that it hung,  
And, as an anchor,  
played a part



They little thought of at the start.  
At length, in spite of sweeping blast,  
Some friendly branches held them fast:  
And then, descending, safe and sound,  
The daring Brownies reached the ground  
But in the tree-top on the hill  
The old balloon is hanging still,  
And saves the farmers on the plain  
From placing scare-crows in their grain.

## THE BROWNIES CANOEING.



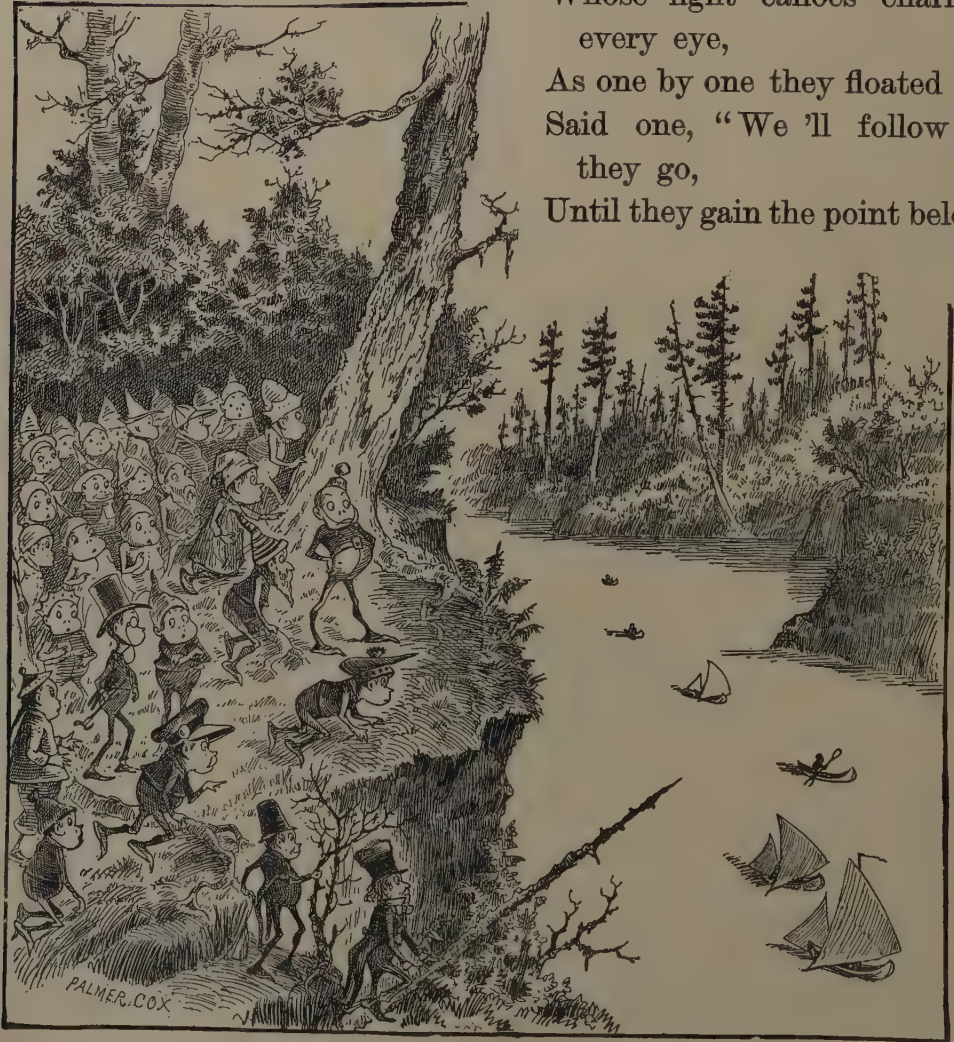
S day in shades of evening sank,  
The Brownies reached a river bank;  
And there awhile stood gazing down  
At students from a neighboring town,

Whose light canoes charmed  
every eye,

As one by one they floated by.

Said one, "We 'll follow as  
they go,

Until they gain the point below.







There stands a house, but  
lately made,  
Wherein the club's effects are  
laid;  
We'll take possession after  
dark,  
And in these strange affairs  
embark."

They all declared, at any cost,  
A chance like this should ne'er be lost;  
And keeping well the men in sight  
They followed closely as they might.

The moon was climbing o'er the hill,  
The owl was hooting by the mill,  
When from the building on the sands  
The boats were shoved with willing  
hands.

A "Shadow" model some explored,  
And then well-pleased they rushed on  
board;

The open "Peterboro'," too,  
Found its supporters—and a crew.  
The Indian "Birch-bark" seemed too  
frail

And lacked the adjunct of a sail,  
Yet of a load it did not  
fail,—

For all the boats were in  
demand;

As well those which with  
skill were planned

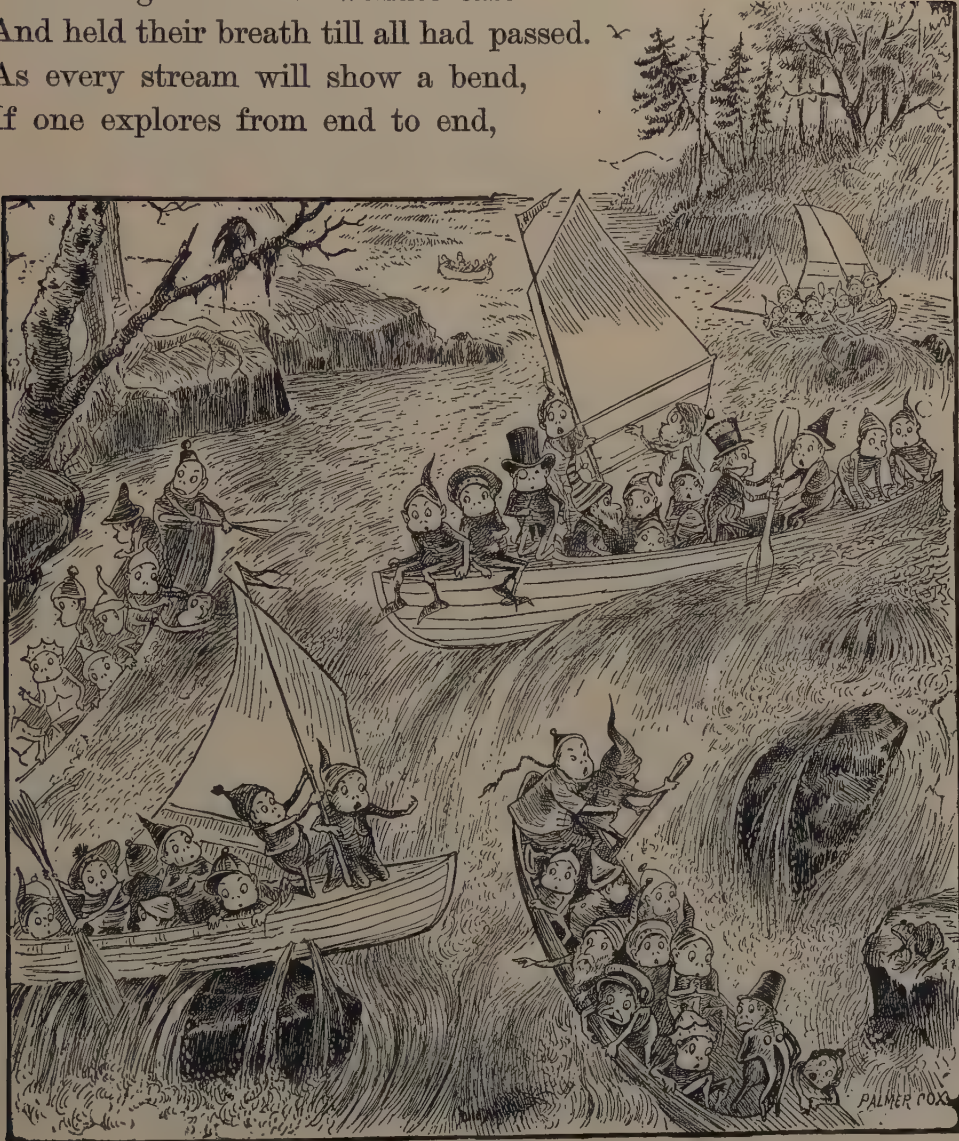
By men of keenest judgment ripe,  
As those of humbler, home-made type.  
And soon away sailed all the fleet  
With every Brownie in his seat.



The start was promising and fine;  
With little skill and less design  
They steered along as suited best,  
And let the current do the rest.



All nature seemed to be aware  
That something strange was stirring there.  
The owl to-whooed, the raven croaked;  
The mink and rat with caution poked  
Their heads above the wave, aghast;  
While frogs a look of wonder cast  
And held their breath till all had passed.  
As every stream will show a bend,  
If one explores from end to end,







So every river, great and small,  
Must have its rapids and its fall;  
And those who on its surface glide  
O'er rough as well as smooth must ride.  
The stream whereon had started out  
The Brownie band in gleeful rout

Was wild enough  
At times it tum-  
O'er shelving rocks  
At times it formed  
A brood of whirl-  
That with each oth-  
As fated objects

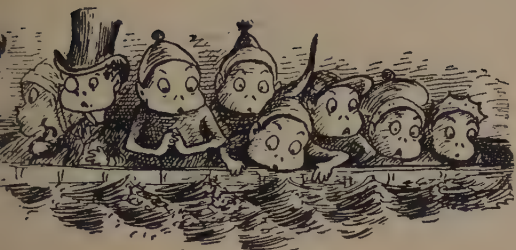


to please a trout.  
bled on its way  
and boulders gray,  
from side to side  
pools deep and wide,  
er seemed to vie  
drifted nigh.

Ere long each watchful Brownie there,  
Of all these facts grew well aware;  
Some losing faith, as people will,  
In their companions' care or skill,  
Would seize the paddle for a time,



Until a disapproving chime  
Of voices made them rest their hand,  
And let still others take command.  
But, spite of current, whirl,  
or go,  
In spite of hungry tribes  
below,—



The eel, the craw-fish, leech, and pout,  
That watched them from the starting out,  
And thought each moment flitting by  
Might spill them out a year's supply,—  
The Brownies drifted onward still;  
And though confusion baffled skill,

Canoes throughout the trying race  
Kept right side up in every case.  
But sport that traveled hand in hand  
With horrors hardly pleased the band,  
As pallid cheek and popping eye  
On every side could testify;  
And all agreed that wisdom lay  
In steering home without delay.

So landing quick, the boats they tied  
To roots or trees as chance supplied,  
And plunging in the woods profound,  
They soon were lost to sight and sound.



# THE BROWNIES IN THE MENAGERIE.



THE Brownies heard the news with  
glee,

That in a city near the sea  
A spacious building was designed  
For holding beasts of every kind.  
From polar snows, from desert  
sand,

From mountain peak, and tim-  
bered land,

The beasts with claw and  
beasts with hoof,  
All met beneath one slated  
roof.

That night, like bees before  
the wind,

With home in sight, and  
storm behind,

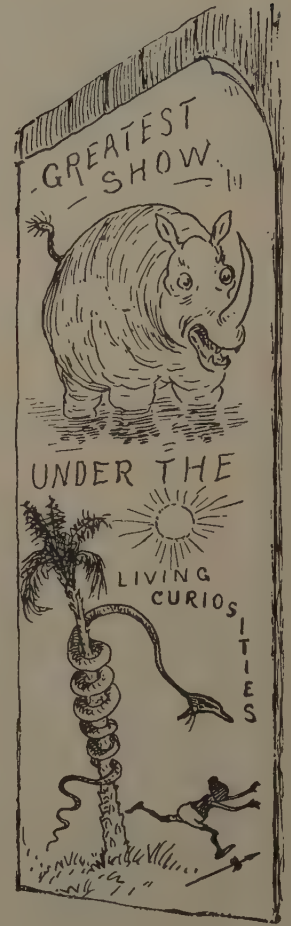
The band of Brownies might  
be seen,

All scudding from the forest green.

Less time it took the walls to scale  
Than is required to tell the tale.

The art that makes the lock seem  
weak,

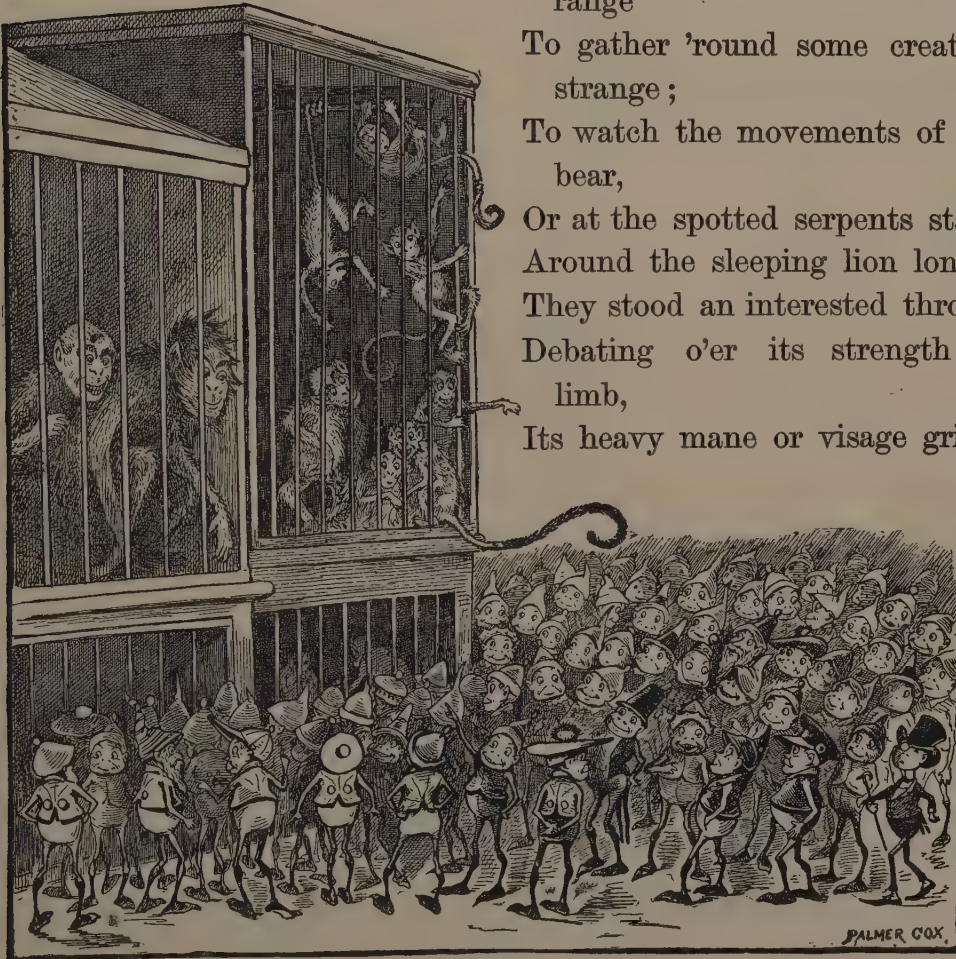
The bolt to slide, the hinge to creak,  
Was theirs to use as heretofore,  
With good effect, on sash and door;  
And soon the band stood face to face  
With all the wonders of the place.





To Brownies, as to children dear,  
 The monkey seemed a creature queer;  
 They watched its skill to climb and cling,  
 By either toe or tail to swing;  
 Perhaps they got some hints that might  
 Come well in hand some future night,  
 When climbing up a wall or tree,  
 Or chimney, as the case might be.

Then off to other parts they 'd  
 range  
 To gather 'round some creature  
 strange;  
 To watch the movements of the  
 bear,  
 Or at the spotted serpents stare.  
 Around the sleeping lion long  
 They stood an interested throng,  
 Debating o'er its strength of  
 limb,  
 Its heavy mane or visage grim.





The mammoth turtle from its pen  
Was driven 'round and 'round again,  
And though the coach proved rather  
slow

They kept it hours upon the go.  
Said one, "Before your face and  
eyes

I'll take that snake from where it  
lies,

And like a Hindoo of the East,  
Benumb and charm the crawling  
beast,

Then twist him 'round me on the  
spot

And tie him in a sailor's knot."

Another then was quick to shout,

"We'll leave that snake performance out!

I grant you all the power you claim

To charm, to tie, to twist and tame;

But let me still suggest you try

Your art when no one else is nigh.

Of all the beasts that creep or crawl

From Rupert's Land to China's wall,

In torrid, mild, or frigid zone,

The snake is best to let alone."

Against this counsel, seeming good,

At least a score of others stood.

Said one, "My friend, suppress alarm;

There's nothing here to threaten harm.

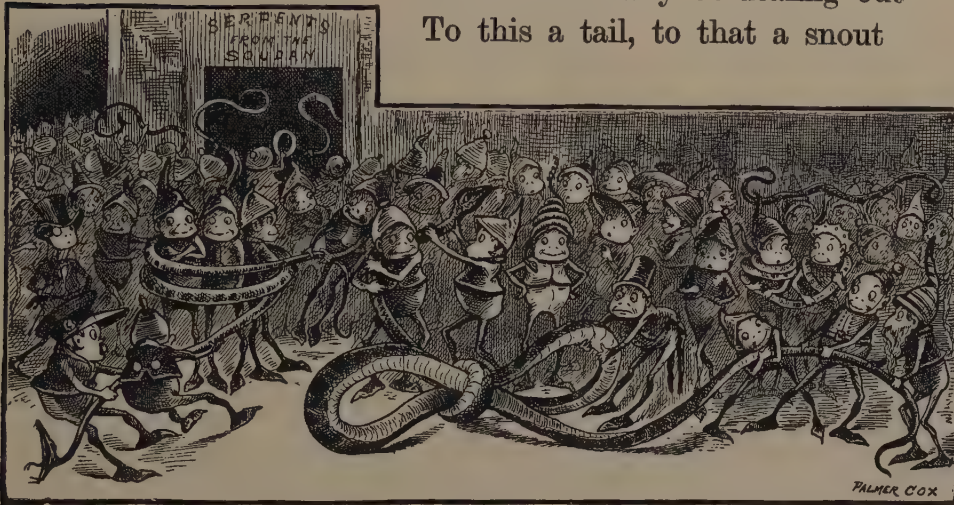
Be sure the power that mortals hold

Is not denied the Brownies bold."



So, harmlessly as silken bands  
 The snakes were twisted in their hands.  
 Some hauled them freely 'round the place;  
 Some braided others in a trace;  
 And every knot to sailors known,  
 Was quickly tied, and quickly shown.

Thus, 'round from cage to cage they went,  
 For some to smile, and some comment  
 On Nature's way of dealing out  
 To this a tail, to that a snout



Of extra length, and then deny  
 To something else a fair supply.  
 — But when the bear and tiger growled,  
 And wolf and lynx in chorus howled,  
 And starting from its broken sleep,  
 The lion rose with sudden leap,  
 And, bounding 'round the rocking cage,  
 With lifted mane, roared loud with rage,  
 And thrust its paws between the bars,  
 Until it seemed to shake the stars,—





A panic seized the Brownies all,  
And out they scampered from the hall,  
As if they feared incautious men  
Had built too frail a prison pen.

## THE BROWNIES' CIRCUS.

ONE night the circus was in town  
With tumbling men and painted clown,  
And Brownies came from forest deep  
Around the tent to climb and creep,  
And through the canvas, as they might  
Of inner movements gain a sight.







Said one, "A chance we'll hardly find  
That better suits the Brownie mind;  
To-night when all this great array  
Of people take their homeward way,  
We'll promptly make a swift descent  
And take possession of the tent,  
And here, till morning light is shown,  
We'll have a circus of our own."

"I best," cried one, "of all the band  
The elephant can take in hand;  
I noticed how they led him round  
And marked the place he may be found;  
On me you may depend to keep  
The monster harmless as a sheep."

The laughing crowd that filled the place,  
Had hardly homeward turned its face,  
Before the eager waiting band  
Took full possession as they planned,  
And 'round they scampered left and  
right



To see what offered most delight.  
Cried one, "If I can only find  
The whip, I'll have a happy mind;  
For I'll be master of the ring  
And keep the horses on the spring,  
Announce the names of those who ride,  
And snap the whip on every side."  
Another said, "I'll be a clown;  
I saw the way they tumble down,  
And how the cunning rogues contrive  
To always keep the fun alive."







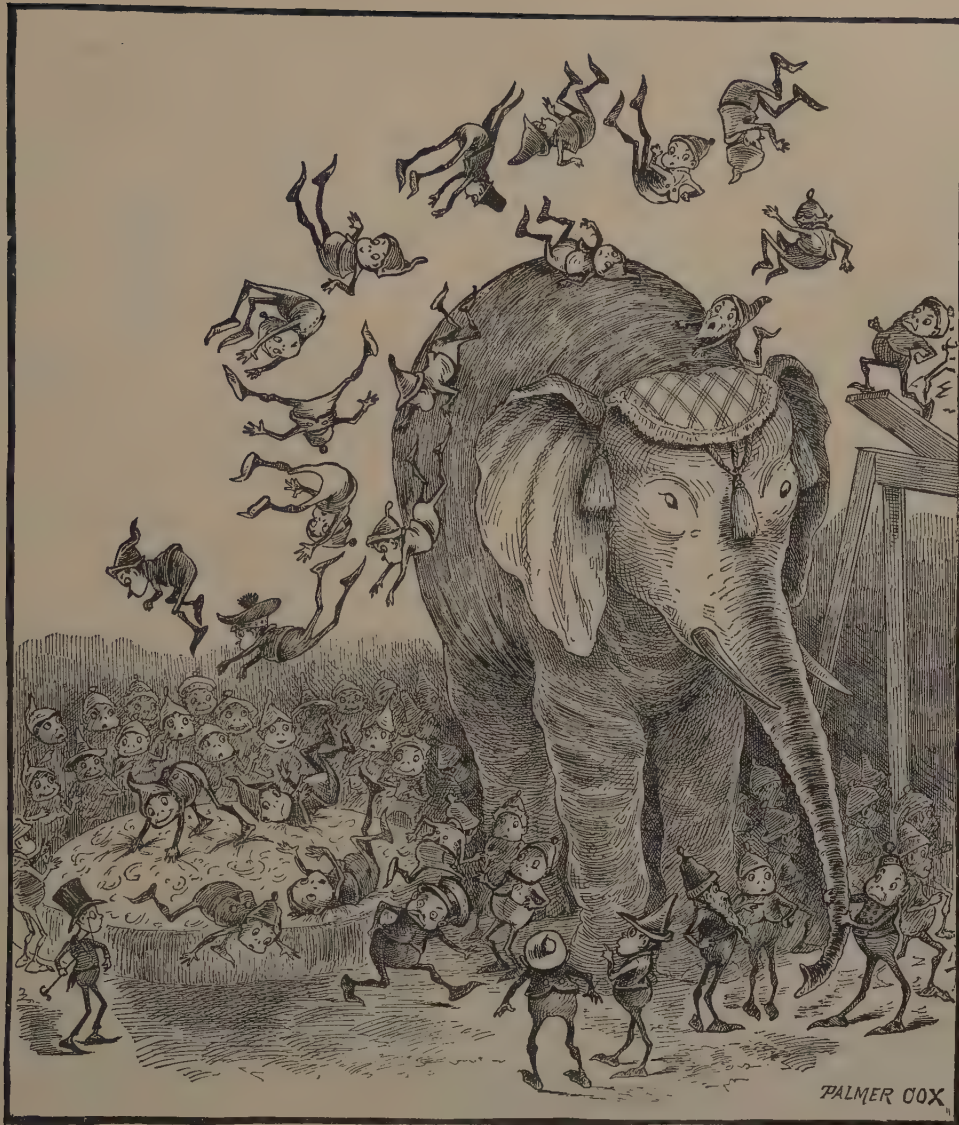
With such remarks away they went  
At this or that around the tent;  
The wire that not an hour before  
The Japanese had traveled o'er  
From end to end with careful stride,  
Was hunted up and quickly tried.  
Not one alone upon it stepped,  
But up by twos and threes they crept,  
Until the strand appeared to bear  
No less than half the Brownies there.  
Some showed an easy, graceful pose,  
But some put little faith in toes,  
And thought that fingers, after all,  
Are best if one begins to fall.

When weary of a sport they grew,  
Away to other tricks they flew.  
They rode upon the rolling ball  
Without regard to slip or fall;  
Both up and down the steep incline  
They kept their place, with balance fine,  
Until it bounded from the road,  
And whirled away without its load,

They galloped 'round the dusty ring  
Without a saddle, strap or string,  
And jumped through hoops both large and small,  
And over banners, poles and all.

In time the elephant was found  
And held as though in fetters bound;  
Their mystic power controlled the beast,—  
He seemed afraid to move the least,  
But filled with wonder, limp and lax,  
He stood and trembled in his tracks,  
While all the band from first to last  
Across his back in order passed.





So thus they saw the moments fly  
Till dawn began to paint the sky;  
And then by every flap and tear  
They made their way to open air,  
And off through lanes and alleys passed  
To reach their hiding-place at last.

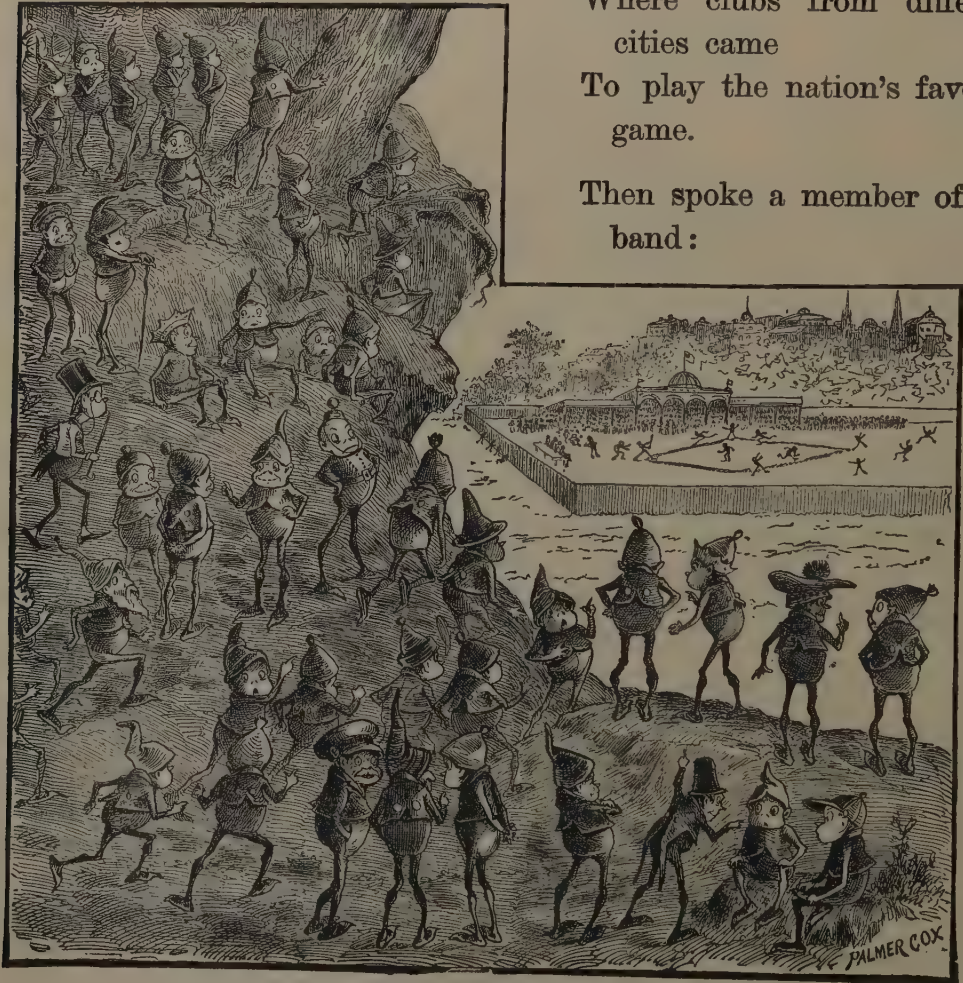


# THE BROWNIES AT BASE-BALL.



Where clubs from different  
cities came  
To play the nation's favorite  
game.

Then spoke a member of the  
band:





"This game extends throughout the land;  
No city, town, or village 'round,  
But has its club, and diamond ground,  
With bases marked, and paths between,  
And seats for crowds to view the scene.  
At other games we've not been slow  
Our mystic art and skill to show;  
Let's take our turn at ball and bat,  
And prove ourselves expert at that."

Another answered: "I     have planned  
A method to equip     our band.

There is a firm in yonder town,  
Whose goods have won them wide renown;  
Their special branch of business lies  
In sending forth these club supplies.  
The balls are wound as hard as stones,  
The bats are turned as smooth as bones,  
And masks are made to guard the nose  
Of him who fears the batter's blows,

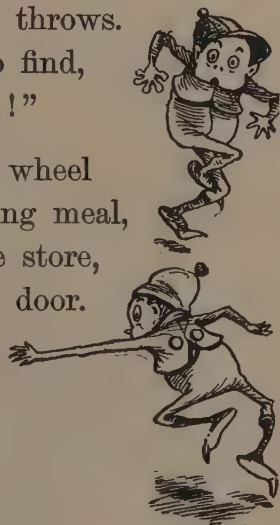


Or stops the pitcher's curves and throws.  
To know the place such goods to find,  
Is quite enough for Brownie-kind!"



When hungry bats came forth to wheel  
'Round eaves and find their evening meal,  
The cunning Brownies sought the store,  
To work their way through sash and door.  
And soon their beaming faces told  
Success had crowned their efforts  
bold.

A goodly number of the throng  
Took extra implements along,

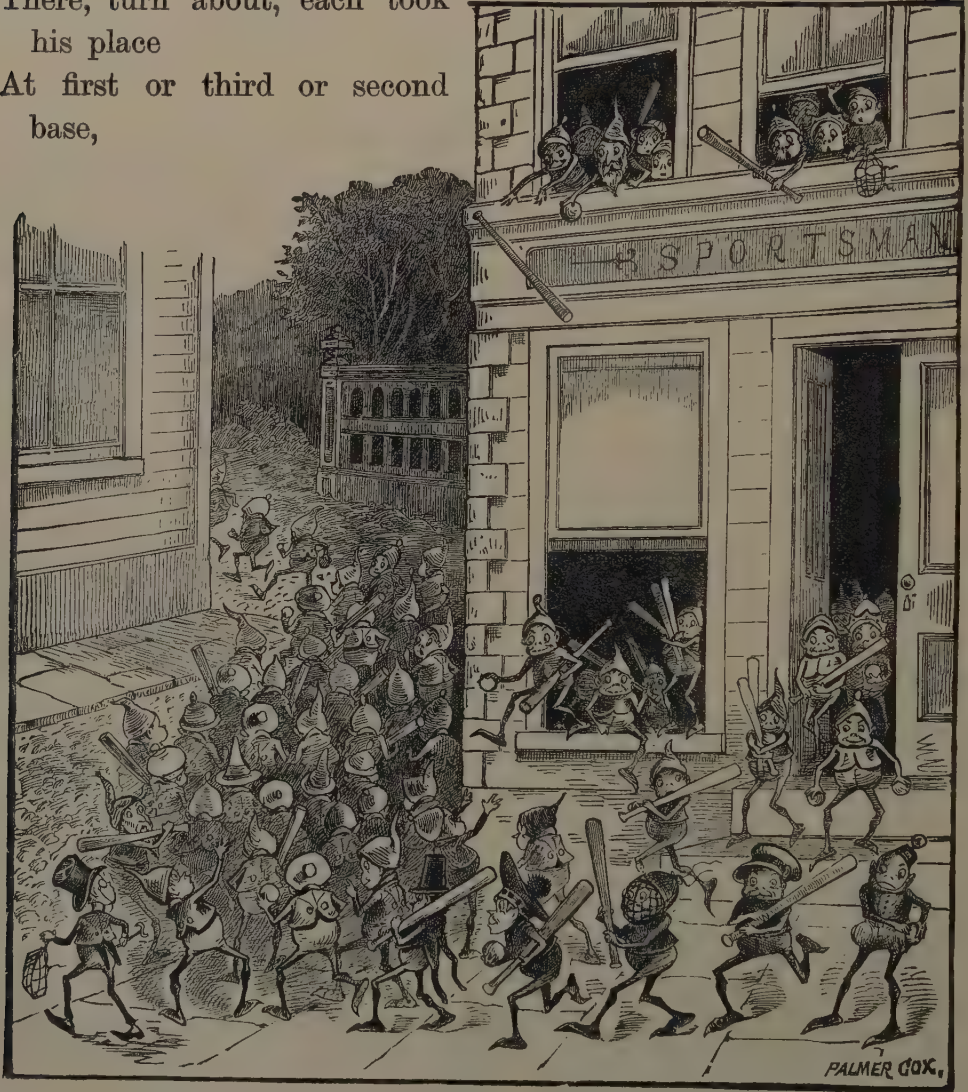




In case of mishap on the way,  
Or loss, or breakage during play.  
The night was clear, the road was good,  
And soon within the field they stood.

Then games were played without a pause,  
According to the printed laws.

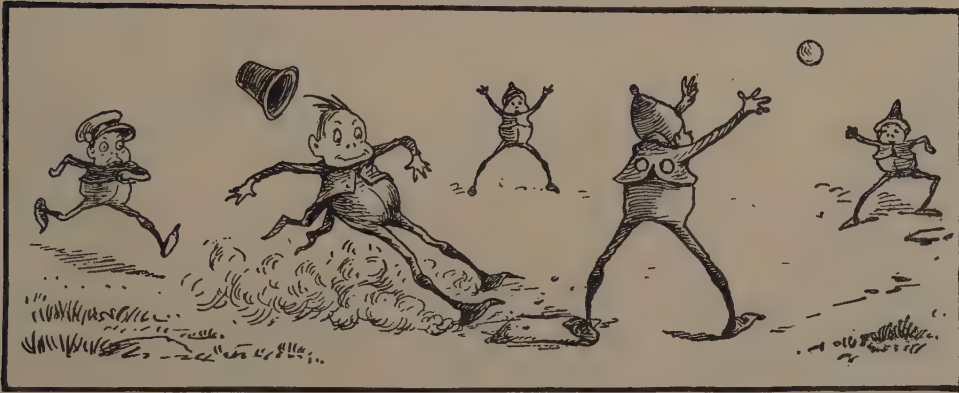
There, turn about, each took  
his place  
At first or third or second  
base,





At left or right or center field,  
To pitch, to catch, or bat to wield,  
Or else as "short-stop" standing by  
To catch a "grounder" or a "fly."

Soon every corner of the ground  
Its separate set of players found.  
A dozen games upon the green,  
With ins and outs might there be seen;  
The umpires noting all with care  
To tell if hits were foul or fair,



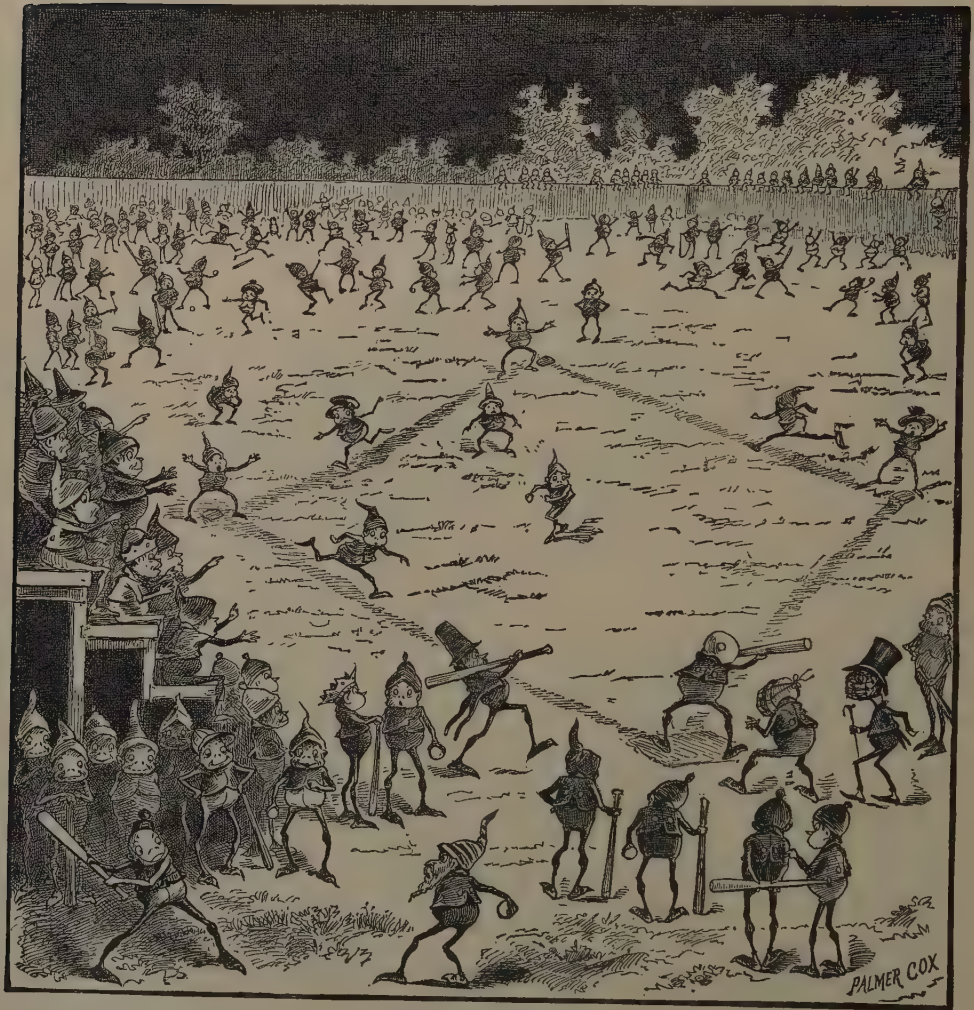
The "strikes" and "balls" to plainly shout,  
And say if men were "safe" or "out,"  
And give decision just and wise  
When knotty questions would arise.



But many Brownies thought it best  
To leave the sport and watch the rest;  
And from the seats or fences high  
They viewed the scene with anxious eye  
And never failed, the contest through,  
To render praise when praise was due.



While others, freed from games on hand,  
In merry groups aside would stand,  
And pitch and catch with rarest skill  
To keep themselves in practice still.



Now "double plays" and balls well curved  
And "base hits" often were observed,  
While "errors" were but seldom seen  
Through all the games upon that green.

Before the flush of morn arose  
To bring their contests to a close,  
The balls and bats in every case  
Were carried back and put in place;  
And when the Brownies left the store,  
All was in order as before.

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## THE BROWNIES AND THE BEES.



WHILE Brownies once were rambling through  
A forest where tall timber grew,  
The hum of bees above their head  
To much remark and wonder led.

They gazed at branches in the air  
And listened at the roots with care,  
And soon a pine of giant size  
Was found to hold the hidden prize.

Said one: "Some wild bees here have made  
Their home within the forest shade,  
Where neither fox nor prying bear  
Can steal the treasure gathered there."

Another spoke: "You're quick and bright,  
And as a rule judge matters right;  
But here, my friend, you're all astray,  
And like the blind mole grope your way.  
I chance well to remember still,  
How months ago, when up the hill,



A farmer near, with bell and horn,  
Pursued a swarm one sunny morn.  
The fearful din the town awoke,  
The clapper from his bell he  
broke;  
But still their queen's directing cry



The bees heard o'er the clamor high;  
And held their bearing for this pine  
As straight as runs the county line.  
With taxes here, and failures there,  
The man can ill such losses bear.  
In view of this, our duty's clear:  
To-morrow night we'll muster here,  
And when we give this tree a fall,  
In proper shape we'll hive them all,

And take the queen and working throng  
And lazy drones where they belong."

Next evening, at the time they 'd set,  
Around the pine the Brownies met  
With tools collected, as they sped  
From mill and shop and farmer's shed;  
While some, to all their wants alive,  
With ready hands procured a hive.

Ere work began, said one: "I fear  
But little sport awaits us here.  
Be sure a trying task we'll find;  
The bee is fuss and fire combined.

Let's take him in his drowsy hour,  
Or when palavering to the flower.  
For bees, however wild or tame,  
In all lands are about the same;  
And those will rue it who neglect  
To treat the buzzer with respect."



Ere long, by steady grasp and blow,  
The towering tree was leveled low;  
And then the hive was made to rest  
In proper style above the nest,  
Until the queen and all her train  
Did full and fair possession gain.



Then 'round the hive a sheet  
That some were thoughtful  
to provide,  
And off on poles, as best  
they could,  
They bore the burden from the wood.



was tied,





But trouble, as one may divine,  
Occurred at points along the line.

'T was bad enough on level ground,  
Where, now and then, *one* exit found;



But when the Brownies lacked a road,  
Or climbed the fences with their load,—  
Then numbers of the prisoners there  
Came trooping out to take the air,



And managed straight enough to fly  
To keep excitement running high.



With branches broken off to suit,  
And grass uplifted by the root,

In vain some daring Brownies tried  
To brush the buzzing plagues aside.  
Said one, whose features proved to all  
That bees had paid his face a call:  
"I'd rather dare the raging main  
Than meddle with such things again."  
"The noble voice," another cried,  
"Of duty still must rule and guide,—  
Or in the ditch the sun would see  
The tumbled hive for all of me."

And when at last the fence they found  
That girt the farmer's orchard 'round,  
And laid the hive upon the stand,  
There hardly was, in all the band,  
A single Brownie who was free  
From some reminders of the bee.

But thoughts of what a great surprise  
Ere long would light the farmer's eyes  
Soon drove away from every brain  
The slightest thought of toil or pain.



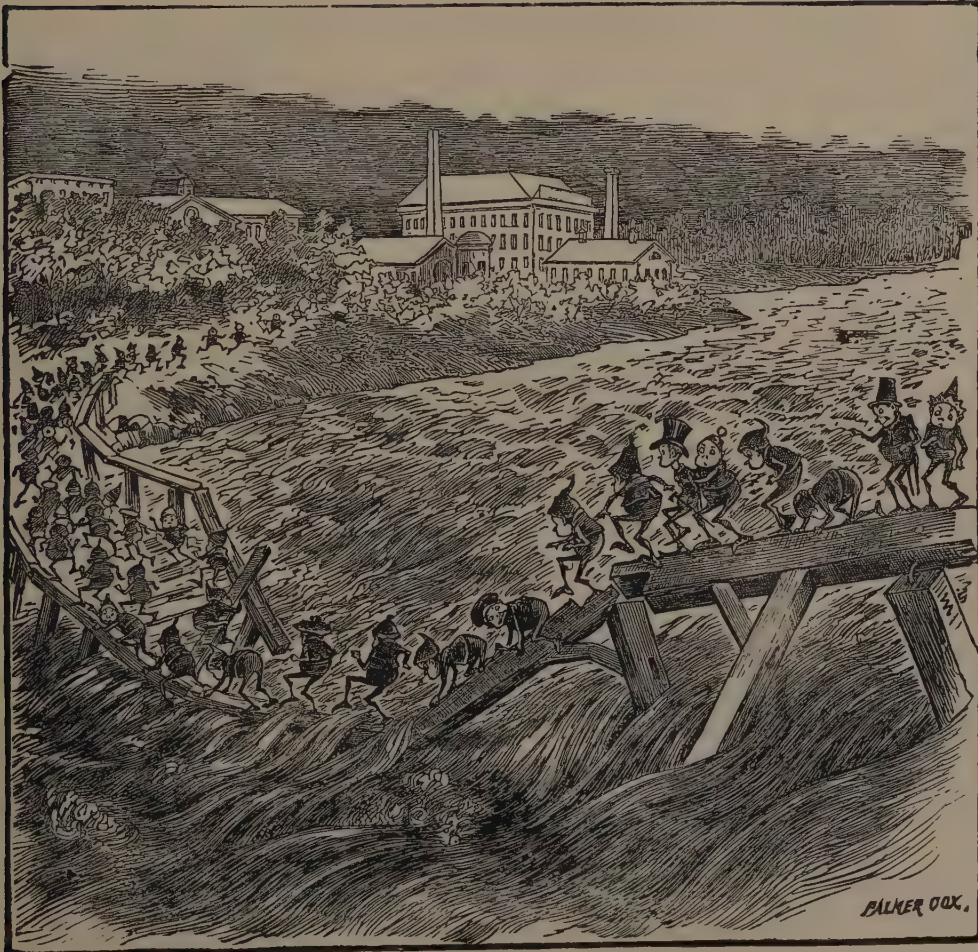


# THE BROWNIES ON ROLLER SKATES.



THE Brownies planned at close of day  
To reach a town some miles away,  
Where roller skating, so 't was said,  
Of all amusements kept ahead.

Said one: "When deeper shadows fall,  
We'll cross the river find the hall,





And learn the nature of the sport  
Of which we hear such good report."

To reach the bridge that led to town,  
With eager steps they hastened down;  
But recent rains had caused a rise—  
The stream was now a fearful size;  
The bridge was nearly swept away,  
Submerged in parts, and wet with spray.

But when the cunning Brownies get  
Their mind on some maneuver set,  
Nor wind nor flood, nor frost nor fire  
Can ever make the rogues retire.

Some walked the dripping logs with ease,  
While others crept on hands and knees  
With movements rather safe than fast,  
And inch by inch the danger passed.



Now, guided by the rumbling sound  
That told where skaters circled 'round,  
Through dimly lighted streets they flew,  
And close about the building drew.

Without delay the active band,  
By spouts and other means at hand,

Of skill and daring furnished proof  
And gained possession of the roof;  
Then through the skylight viewed the show  
Presented by the crowds below.



Said one: "While I survey that floor  
I'm filled with longing more and more,



And discontent with me will bide  
Till 'round the rink I smoothly glide.  
At night I 've ridden through the air,  
Where bats abide, and owls repair;  
I 've rolled in surf of ocean wide,  
And coasted down the mountain-side;  
And now to sweep around a hall  
On roller skates would crown it all."

"My plans," the leader answer made,  
"Are in my mind already laid.  
Within an hour the folk below  
Will quit their sport and homeward go;

Then will the time  
For us to leave this  
And prove how well  
We may command

When came the  
And people from



be ripe, indeed,  
roof with speed,  
our toes and heels  
when set on wheels."

closing hour at last,  
the rink had passed,

The Brownies hurried down to find  
The roller skates they 'd left behind.

Then such a scene was there as few  
May ever have a chance to view.

Some hardly circled 'round the place,  
Before they moved with ease and grace,  
And skated freely to and fro,  
Upon a single heel or toe.  
Some coats were torn beyond repair,  
By catches here and clutches there,  
When those who felt their faith give way,  
Groped right and left without delay;





While some who strove their friends to aid,  
Upon the floor themselves were laid,  
To spread confusion there awhile,  
As large and larger grew the pile.



Some rose with fingers out of joint,  
Or black and blue at every point ;

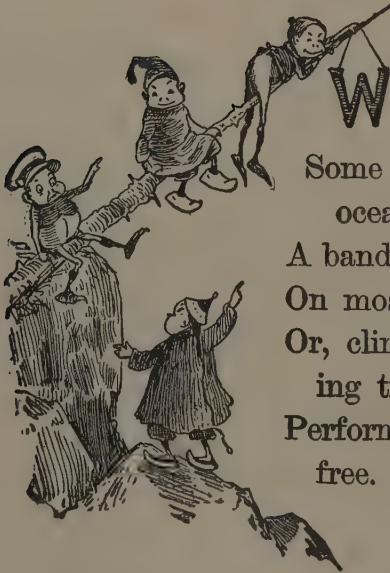


And few but felt some portion sore,  
From introductions to the floor.  
But such mishaps were lost to sight,  
Amid the common wild delight,—  
For little plaint do Brownies make  
O'er bump or bruise or even break.

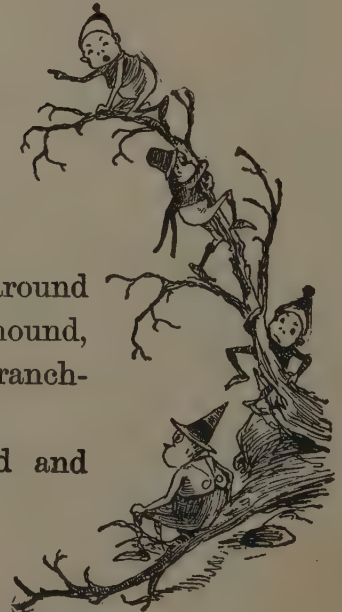
But stars at length began to wane,  
And dawn came creeping through the pane;  
And much against the will of all,  
The rogues were forced to leave the hall.

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## THE BROWNIES AT THE SEASIDE.



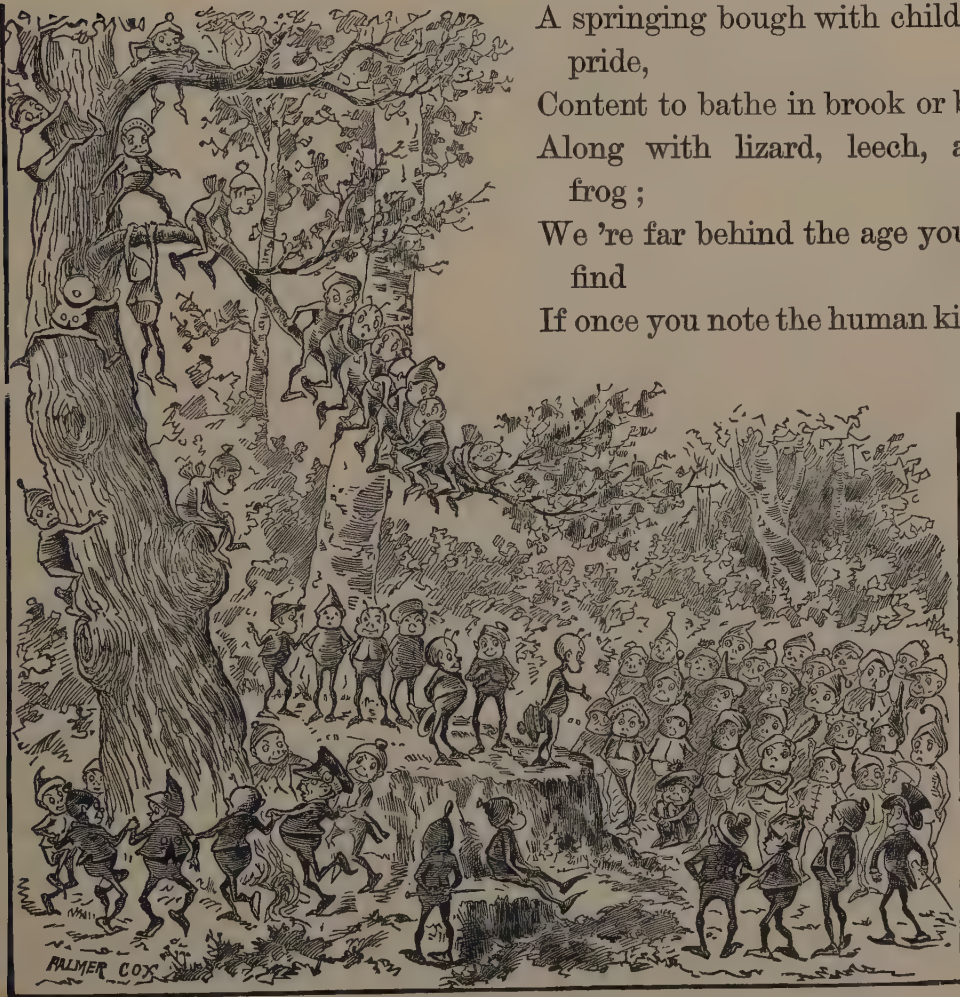
WITHIN a forest dark  
and wide,  
Some distance from the  
ocean side,  
A band of Brownies played around  
On mossy stone or grassy mound,  
Or, climbing through the branch-  
ing tree,  
Performed their antics wild and  
free.





When one, arising in his place  
 With sparkling eyes and beaming face  
 Soon won attention from the rest,  
 And thus the listening throng addressed :  
 "For years and years, through heat and cold,  
 Our home has been this forest old;  
 The saplings which we used to bend  
 Now like a schooner's masts ascend.

Yet here we live, content to ride  
 A springing bough with childish  
 pride,  
 Content to bathe in brook or bog  
 Along with lizard, leech, and  
 frog ;  
 We 're far behind the age you 'll  
 find  
 If once you note the human kind.





The modern youths no longer lave  
 Their limbs beneath the muddy wave  
 Of meadow pool or village pond,  
 But seek the ocean far beyond.

If pleasure in the sea is found  
 Not offered by the streams around,  
 The Brownie band at once should haste

These unfamiliar joys to taste;  
 No torch nor lantern's ray  
 we'll need

To show our path o'er  
 dewy mead,

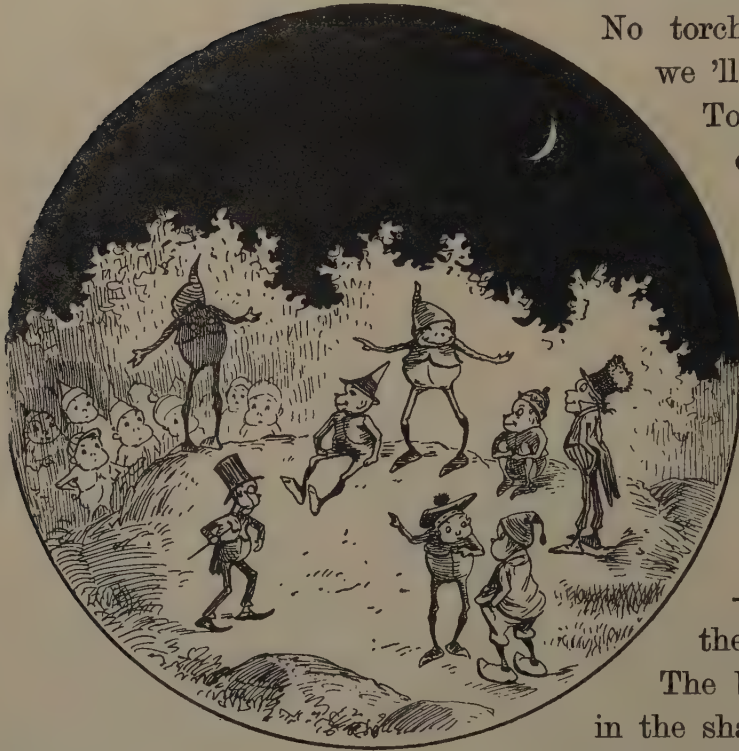
The ponds and pit-  
 falls in the swale,  
 The open ditch,  
 the slivered rail,  
 The poison vine  
 and thistle high  
 Show clear be-  
 fore the Brown-  
 ie's eye."

—Next evening, as  
 their plan they'd laid,  
 The band soon gathered  
 in the shade.

All clustered like a swarm of bees

They darted from the sheltering trees;  
 And straight across the country wide  
 Began their journey to the tide.

And when they neared the beach at last,—  
 The stout, the lean, the slow, the fast,—  
 'T was hard to say, of all the lot,  
 Who foremost reached the famous spot.



"And now," said one with active mind.  
"What proper garments can we find?  
In bathing costume, as you know,  
The people in the ocean go."

Another spoke, "For such demands,  
The building large that yonder stands,

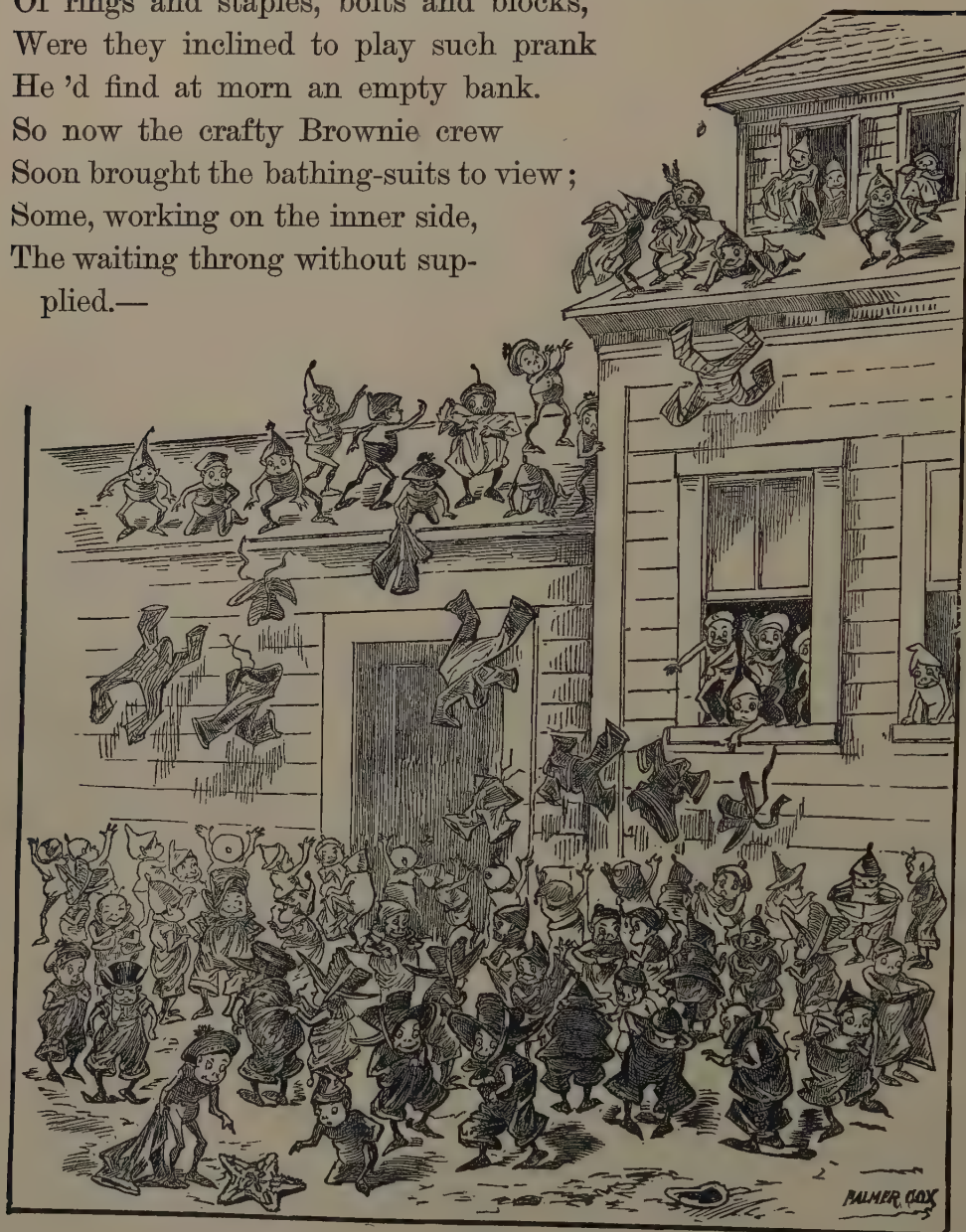


As one can see on passing by,  
Is full of garments clean and dry.  
There every fashion, loose or tight,  
We may secure with labor light."

Though Brownies never carry keys,  
They find an entrance where they please;



And never do they chuckle more  
 Than when some miser bars his door;  
 For well they know that, spite of locks,  
 Of rings and staples, bolts and blocks,  
 Were they inclined to play such prank  
 He'd find at morn an empty bank.  
 So now the crafty Brownie crew  
 Soon brought the bathing-suits to view;  
 Some, working on the inner side,  
 The waiting throng without supplied.—





'T was busy work, as may be guessed,  
 Before the band was fully dressed;  
 Some still had cloth enough to lend,  
 Though shortened up at either end;  
 Some ran about to find a pin,  
 While others rolled, and puckered in,



And made the best of what they found,  
 However strange it hung around.

Then, when a boat was manned with care  
 To watch for daring swimmers there,—

Lest some should venture, over-bold,  
 And fall a prey to cramp and cold,—  
 A few began from piers to leap  
 And plunge at once in water deep,  
 But more to shiver, shrink, and shout



As step by step they ventured out;  
 While others were content to stay  
 In shallow surf, to duck and play  
 Along the lines that people laid  
 To give the weak and timid aid.

It was a sight one should behold,  
 When o'er the crowd the breakers rolled;—  
 One took a header through the wave,  
 One floated like a chip or stave,  
 While others there, at every plunge,  
 Were taking water like a sponge.



But while the surf they tumbled through,  
 They reckoned moments as they flew,  
 And kept in mind their homeward race  
 Before the sun should show his face.



For sad and painful is the fate  
Of those who roam abroad too late ;  
And well may Brownies bear in mind  
The hills and vales they leave behind,  
When far from native haunts they run,  
As oft they do, in quest of fun.

But, ere they turned to leave the strand,  
They made a vow with lifted hand  
That every year, when summer's glow  
Had warmed the ocean spread below,  
They'd journey far from grove and glen  
To sport in rolling surf again.



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## THE BROWNIES AND THE SPINNING-WHEEL.



ONE evening, with the falling dew,  
Some Brownies 'round a cottage drew.  
Said one: "I've learned the reason **why**  
We miss the 'Biddy, Biddy!' cry,  
That every morning brought a score  
Of fowls around this cottage door;  
'T is rheumatism most severe  
That keeps the widow prisoned here.  
Her sheep go bleating through the field,  
In quest of salt no herb can yield,  
To early roost the fowls withdraw  
While each bewails an empty craw,

And sore neglect you may discern  
On every side, where'er you turn.  
If aid come to the widow's need,  
From Brownies' hands it must proceed."  
Another said: "The wool, I know,  
Went through the mill a month ago.



I saw them when they bore the sack  
Up yonder hill, a wondrous pack  
That caught the branches overhead,  
And round their heels the gravel spread.  
Her spinning-wheel is lying there  
In fragments quite beyond repair.  
A passing goat, with manners bold,  
Mistook it for a rival old,





And knocked it 'round for half an  
hour

With all his noted butting power.  
They say it was a striking scene,  
That twilight conflict on the green;  
The wheel was resting on the shed,  
The frame around the garden spread,  
Before the goat had gained his sight,  
And judged the article aright."

A third remarked: "I call to mind  
Another wheel that we may find,  
Though somewhat worn by use and  
time,

It seems to be in order prime;  
Now, night is but a babe as yet,  
The dew has scarce the clover wet;  
By running fast and working hard  
We soon can bring it to the yard;  
Then stationed here in open air  
The widow's wool shall be our care."

This suited all, and soon with zeal  
They started off to find the wheel;  
Their course across the country lay  
Where great obstructions barred the  
way;

But Brownies seldom go around  
However rough or wild the ground.

O'er rocky slope and marshy bed,  
With one accord they pushed ahead,—





Across the tail-race of a mill,  
And through a churchyard on the hill.

They found the wheel, with head and feet,  
And band and fixtures, all complete ;



And soon beneath the trying load  
Were struggling on the homeward road.

They had some trouble, toil, and care,  
Some hoisting here, and hauling there ;



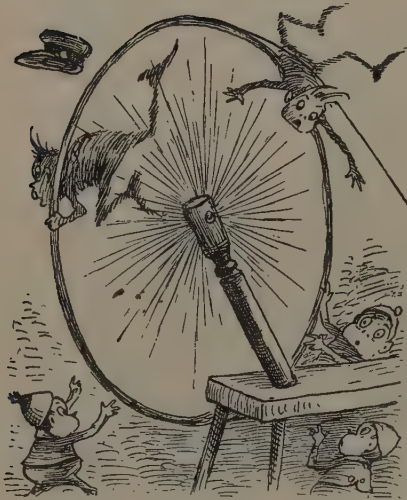


At times, the wheel upon a fence  
Defied them all to drag it thence,  
As though determined to remain  
And serve the farmer, guarding grain.  
But patient head and willing hand  
Can wonders work in every land;

And cunning Brownies never yield,  
But aye as victors leave the field.

Some ran for sticks, and some for pries,  
And more for blocks on which to rise,  
That every hand or shoulder there,  
In such a pinch might do its share.

Before the door they set the wheel,  
And near at hand the winding reel,  
That some might wind while others spun,  
And thus the task be quickly done.

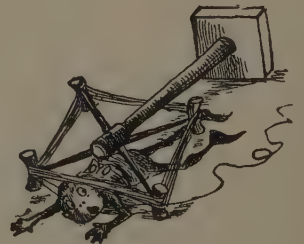


No time was wasted, now, to find  
What best would suit each hand or mind.  
Some through the cottage crept about  
To find the wool and pass it out;  
With some to turn, and some to pull,  
And some to shout, "The spindle's full!"  
The wheel gave out a droning song,—  
The work in hand was pushed along.

Their mode of action and their skill  
With wonder might a spinster fill;  
For out across the yard entire  
They spun the yarn like endless wire,—

Beyond the well with steady haul,  
Across the patch of beans and all,  
Until the walls, or ditches wide,  
A greater stretch of wool denied.

The widow's yarn was quickly wound  
In tidy balls, quite large and round.







And ere the night began to fade,  
The borrowed wheel at home was laid;  
And none the worse for rack or wear,  
Except a blemish here and there,  
A spindle bent, a broken band,—  
'T was ready for the owner's hand,





## THE BROWNIES' VOYAGE.



ONE night, a restless Brownie band  
 Resolved to leave their native strand,  
 And visit islands fair and green,  
 That in the distance might be seen.

In answer to a summons wide,  
 The Brownies came from every side—  
 A novel spectacle they made,  
 All mustered in the forest shade.  
 With working implements they came,  
 Of every fashion, use, and name.

Said one, "How many times have we  
 Surveyed those islands in the sea,  
 And longed for means to thither sail  
 And ramble over hill and vale!



That pleasure rare we may command,  
 Without the aid of human hand.  
 And ere the faintest streak of gray  
 Has advertised the coming day,  
 A sturdy craft, both tough and tall,  
 With masts and halyards, shrouds and all,  
 With sails to spread, and helm to guide,  
 Completed from the ways shall glide.  
 So exercise your mystic power  
 And make the most of every hour!"

With axes, hammers, saws, and rules,  
 Dividers, squares, and boring tools,  
 The active Brownies scattered 'round,  
 And every one his labor found.

Somefell to chopping  
 down the trees,  
 And some to hewing  
 ribs and knees;  
 While more the  
 ponderous keelson  
 made,  
 And fast the shapely  
 hull was laid.  
 Then over all they  
 clambered soon,  
 Like bees around  
 their hive in June.  
 'T was hammer, ham-  
 mer, here and there,  
 And rip and racket  
 everywhere,





While some were spiking planks and beams,  
The calkers stuffed the yawning seams,  
And poured the resin left and right,  
To make her stanch and water-tight.  
Some busily were bringing nails,  
And bolts of canvas for the sails,  
And coils of rope of every size  
To make the ratlines, shrouds, and **guys**.

It mattered little whence it came,  
Or who a loss of stock might claim;  
Supply kept even with demand,  
Convenient to the rigger's hand.

'T was marvelous to see how fast  
The vessel was together cast;  
Until, with all its rigs and stays,  
It sat prepared to leave the ways.  
It but remained to name it now,  
And break a bottle on the bow,  
To knock the wedges from the side,  
And from the keel, and let it slide.



And when it rode upon the sea,  
The Brownies thronged the deck with glee,  
And veering 'round in proper style,  
They bore away for nearest isle.



But those who will the ocean brave  
Should be prepared for wind and wave  
For storms will rise, as many know,  
When least we look for squall or blow  
And soon the sky was overcast,  
And waves were running high and fast;





Then some were sick and some were filled  
With fears that all their ardor chilled;  
But, as when dangers do assail  
The humankind, though some may quail,  
There will be found a few to face  
The danger, and redeem the race,—

So, some brave  
Brownies nobly  
stood  
And manned the ship  
as best they could.  
Some staid on deck  
to sound for bars;  
Some went aloft to  
watch for stars;  
And some around the  
rudder hung,  
And here and there  
the vessel swung,  
While others, strung  
on yard and mast,  
Kept shifting sails  
to suit the blast.

At times, the bow  
was high in air,  
And next the stern  
was lifted there.



So thus it tumbled, tossed, and rolled,  
And shipped enough to fill the hold,  
Till more than once it seemed as though  
To feed the fish they all must go.



But still they bravely tacked and veered,  
And hauled, and reefed, and onward  
steered;  
While screaming birds around them  
wheeled,  
As if to say: "Your doom is sealed";  
And hungry gar and hopeful shark  
In shoals pursued the creaking bark,  
Still wondering how it braved a gale  
That might have made Columbus pale.

The rugged island, near them now,  
Was looming on their starboard bow;  
But knowing not the proper way  
Of entering its sheltered bay,  
They simply kept their canvas spread,  
And steered the vessel straight ahead.  
The birds were distanced in the race;  
The gar and shark gave up the chase,  
And turning back, forsook the keel,  
And lost their chances of a meal.

For now the ship to ruin flew,  
As though it felt its work was through,  
And soon it stranded, "pitch and toss,"  
Upon the rocks, a total loss.  
The masts and spars went by the board—  
The hull was shivered like a gourd!  
But yet, on broken plank and rail,  
On splintered spars and bits of sail  
That strewed for miles the rugged strand,  
The Brownies safely reached the land.





Now, Brownies lack the power, 't is said,  
Of making twice what once they 've made;  
So all their efforts were in vain  
To build and launch the ship again;—  
And on that island, roaming 'round,  
That Brownie band for years was found.



## THE BROWNIES' RETURN.



ONCE while the Brownies lay at ease  
About the roots of rugged trees,  
And listened to the dreary moan  
Of tides around their island lone,  
Said one: "My friends, unhappy here,  
We spend our days from year to year.  
We're cornered in, and hardly boast  
A run of twenty leagues at most.

You all remember well, I ween,  
The night we reached this island green,  
When flocks of fowl around us wailed,  
And followed till their pinions failed.  
And still our ship at every wave  
To sharks a creaking promise gave,  
Then spilled us out in breakers white,  
To gain the land as best we might.  
Since then how oft we've tried in vain  
To reach our native haunts again,  
Where roaming freely, unconfined,  
Would better suit our roving mind.

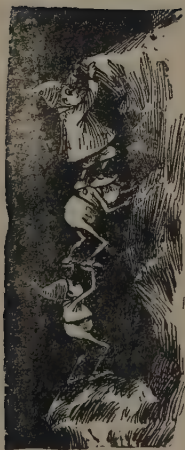
'To-night, while wandering by the sea,  
A novel scheme occurred to me,  
As I beheld in groups and rows  
The weary fowl in deep repose.  
They sat as motionless as though  
The life had left them years ago.  
The albatross and crane are there,  
The loon, the gull, and gannet rare.  
An easy task for us to creep  
Around the fowl, while fast asleep,  
And at a given signal spring  
Aboard, before they spread a wing,  
And trust to them to bear us o'er,  
In safety to our native shore."

Another spoke: "I never yet  
Have shunned a risk that others met  
But here uncommon dangers lie,  
Suppose the fowl should seaward fly,

And never landing, course about,  
And drop us, when their wings gave out?"

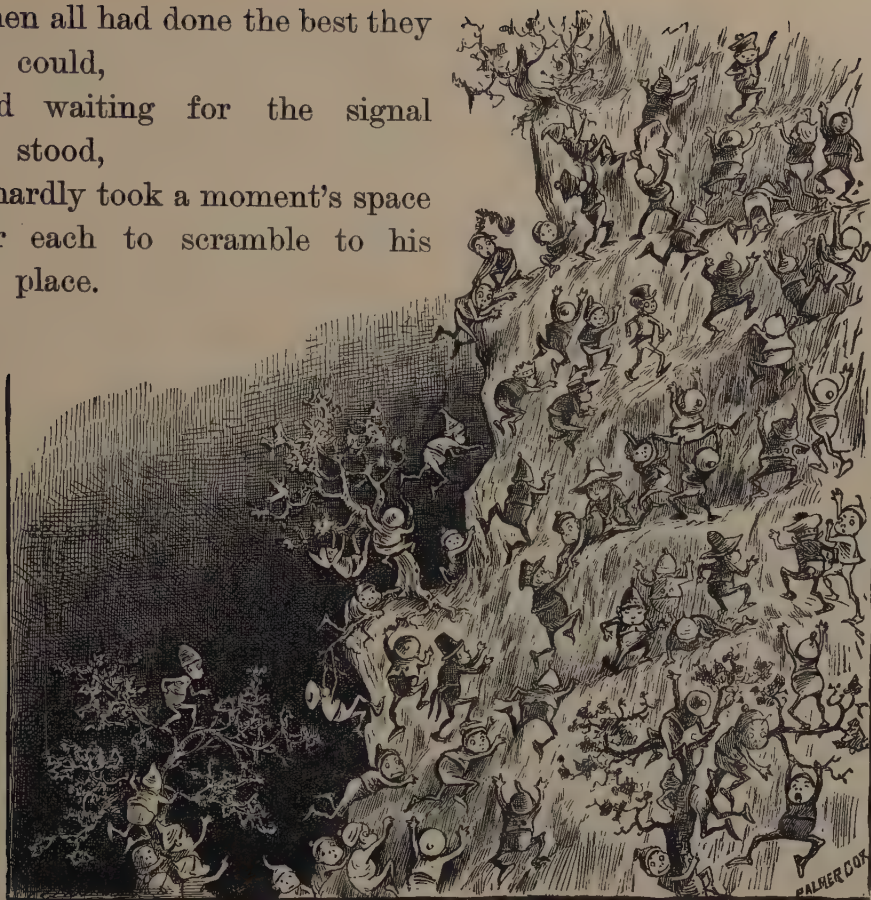
To shallow schemes that will not bring  
A modest risk, let cowards cling!  
The first replied. "A Brownie shows  
The best where dangers thickest close.  
But, hear me out: by sea and land,  
Their habits well I understand.  
When rising first they circle wide,  
As though the strength of wings they tried,  
Then steering straight across the bay,  
To yonder coast a visit pay.  
But granting they for once should be  
Inclined to strike for open sea,  
The breeze that now is rising fast,  
Will freshen to a whistling blast,  
And landward sweeping, stronger still,  
Will drive the fowl against their will."

Now at his heels, with willing feet,  
They followed to the fowls' retreat.  
'T was hard to scale the rugged breast  
Of crags, where birds took nightly rest.  
But some on hands, and some on knees,  
And more by vines or roots of trees,  
From shelf to shelf untiring strained,  
And soon the windy summit gained.  
With bated breath, they gathered round;  
They crawled with care along the ground.  
By this, one paused; or that, one eyed;  
Each chose the bird he wished to ride.





When all had done the best they  
 could,  
 And waiting for the signal  
 stood,  
 It hardly took a moment's space  
 For each to scramble to his  
 place.



Some seized a neck and some a head,  
 And some a wing, and some a shred  
 Of tail, or aught that nearest lay,  
 To help them mount without delay  
 Then rose wild flaps and piercing screams,  
 As sudden starting from their dreams  
 The wondering fowl in sore dismay  
 Brought wings and muscles into play.  
 Some felt the need of longer sleep,  
 And hardly had the strength to "cheep;"

While others seemed to find a store  
 Of screams they 'd never found before  
 —But off like leaves or flakes of snow  
 Before the gale the Brownies go,  
 Away, away, through spray or cloud  
 As fancy led, or load allowed.  
 Some birds to poor advantage showed,  
 As, with an oddly balanced load,  
 Now right or left at random cast,



They flew, the sport  
 of every blast ;  
 While fish below  
 had aching eyes  
 With gazing upward  
 at the prize.  
 They followed still  
 from mile to mile,  
 Believing fortune  
 yet would smile ;  
 While plainer to the  
 Brownies grew  
 The hills and vales  
 that well they  
 knew.  
 "I see," said one,  
 who, from his  
 post  
 Between the wings,  
 could view the  
 coast,  
 "The lofty peaks we  
 used to climb



To gaze upon the  
scene sublime."

A second cried :  
"And there's the  
bay

From which our ves-  
sel bore away!"

'And I," another  
cried, "can see  
The shady grove,  
the very tree  
We met beneath  
the night we  
planned  
To build a ship and  
leave the land!"

All in confusion  
now at last,  
The birds upon the  
shore were cast.  
Some, tumbling  
through thick  
branches, fell



And spilled the load that clung so well.  
Some, "topsy-turvy" to the ground,  
Dispersed their riders all around;  
And others still could barely get  
To shores where land and water met.

Congratulations then began,  
As here and there the Brownies ran.





To learn if all had held their grip  
And kept aboard throughout the trip.  
“And now,” said one, “that all are o’er  
In safety to our native shore,  
You see, so wasted is the night,  
Orion’s belt is out of sight;  
And ere the lamp of Venus fades  
We all must reach the forest shades.

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## THE BROWNIES’ SINGING-SCHOOL.



AS mists of evening deeper grew,  
The Brownies ’round a comrade drew,  
An interesting tale to hear  
About a village lying near.

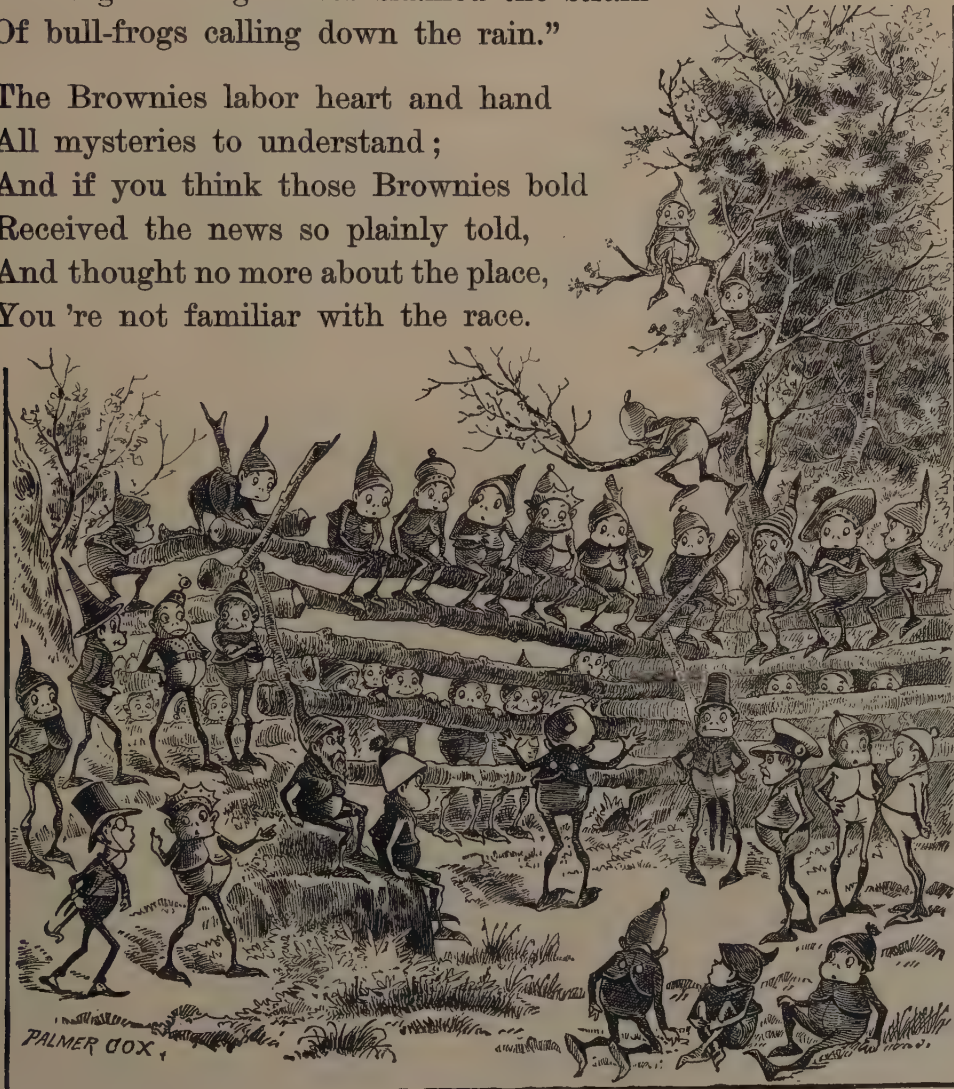
“Last night,” said he, “I heard arise  
From many throats discordant cries.  
At once I followed up the sound,  
And soon, to my amazement, found  
It issued from a building small  
That answered for the county hall.

“I listened there around the door,  
By village time, an hour or more;  
Until I learned beyond a doubt  
A singing-school caused all the rout.

Some, like the hound, would keep ahead,  
 And others seemed to lag instead.  
 Some singers, struggling with the tune,  
 Outscrambled the frightened northern loon.  
 Some mocked the pinched or wheezing cry  
 Of locusts when the wheat is nigh,

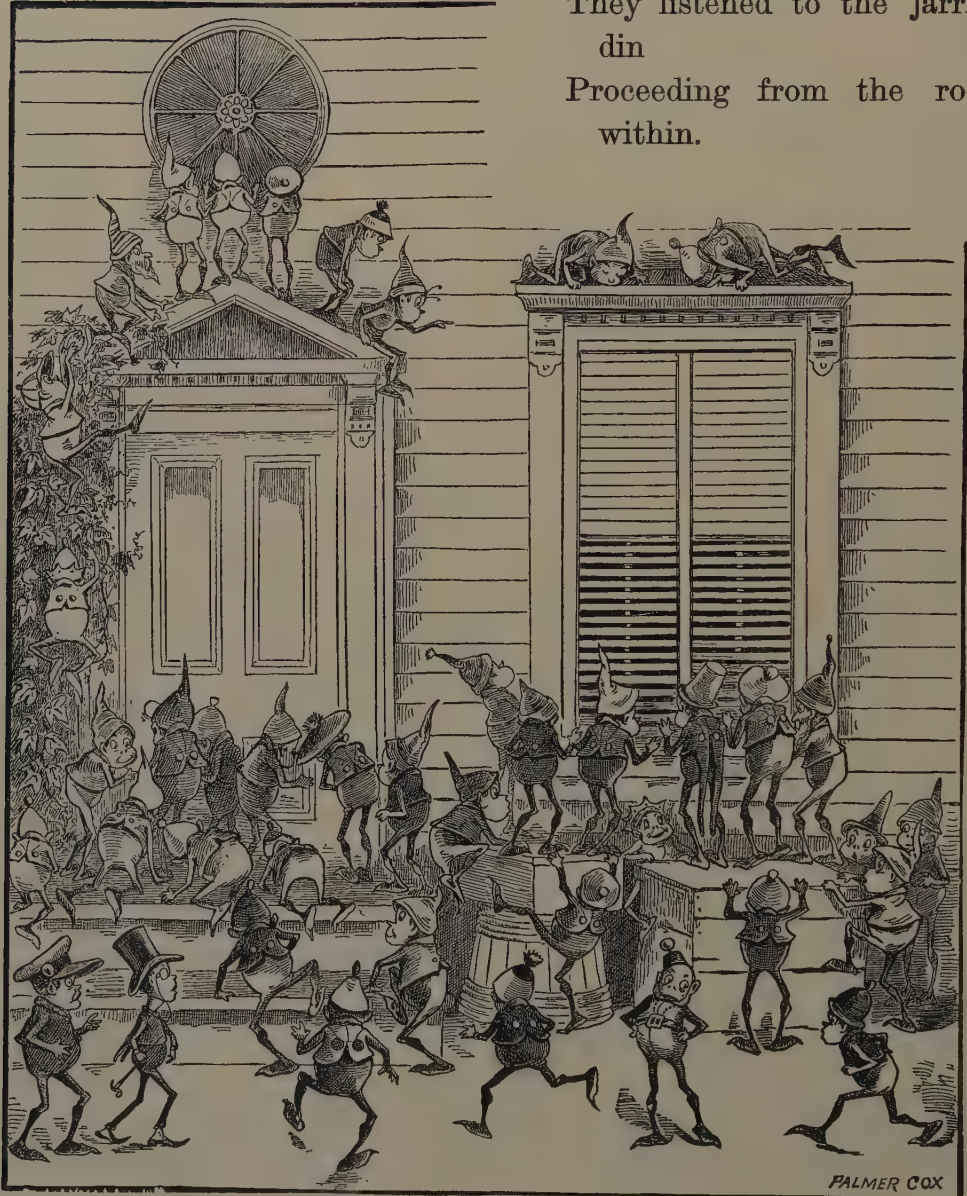
While grumbling bassos shamed the strain  
 Of bull-frogs calling down the rain."

The Brownies labor heart and hand  
 All mysteries to understand;  
 And if you think those Brownies bold  
 Received the news so plainly told,  
 And thought no more about the place,  
 You're not familiar with the race.



When scholars next their voices tried,  
The Brownies came from every side;  
With ears to knot-holes in the wall,  
To door-jambs, thresholds, blinds, and all,

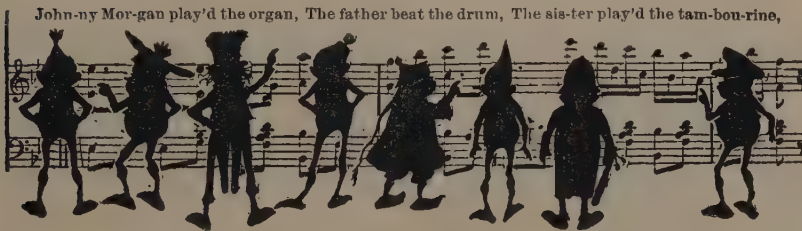
They listened to the jarring  
din  
Proceeding from the room  
within.





Said one at length, "It seems to me  
The master here will earn his fee,  
If he from such a crowd can bring  
A single person trained to sing."  
Another said, "We'll let them try  
Their voices till their throats are dry,  
And when for home they all depart,  
We'll not be slow to test our art."

That night the Brownies cheered to find  
The music had been left behind;  
And when they stood within the hall,  
And books were handed 'round to all,  
They pitched their voices, weak or strong,  
At solemn verse and lighter song.



Some sought a good old hymn to try;  
Some grappled with a lullaby;  
A few a painful effort made  
To struggle through a serenade;  
While more preferred the lively air  
That, hinting less of love or care,  
Possessed a chorus loud and bright  
In which they all could well unite.  
At times some member tried to rule,  
And took control of all the school;

But soon, despairing, was content  
To let them follow out their bent.

They sung both high and low, the same,  
As fancy led or courage came.



Some droned the tune through teeth or nose,  
Some piped like quail, or cawed like crows  
That, hungry, wait the noonday horn  
To call the farmer from his corn.

By turns at windows some would stay  
To note the signs of coming day.  
At length the morning, rising, spread  
Along the coast her streaks of red,  
And drove the Brownies from the place  
To undertake the homeward race.

But many members of the band  
Still kept their singing-books in hand,  
Determined not with those to part  
Till they were perfect in the art.  
And oft in leafy forest shade,  
In after times, a ring they made,  
To pitch the tune, and raise the voice,  
To sing the verses of their choice,  
And scare from branches overhead  
The speckled thrush and robin red,  
And make them feel the time had come  
When singing birds might well be dumb

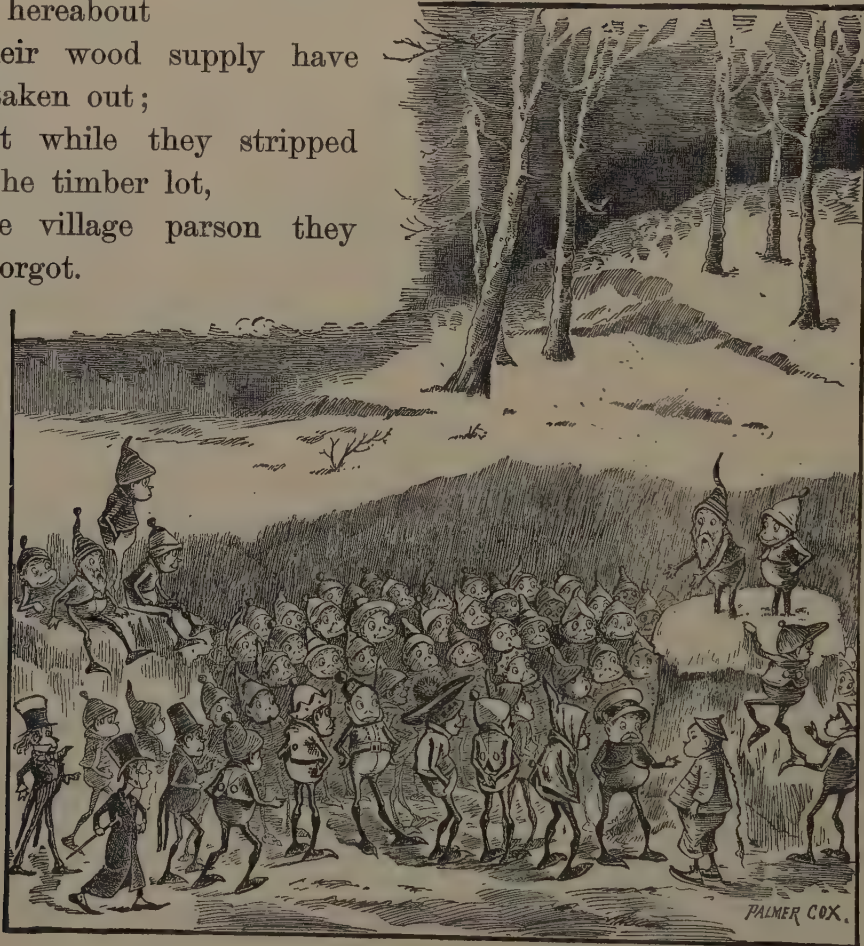




## THE BROWNIES' FRIENDLY TURN.

ONE night while snow was lying deep  
On level plain and mountain steep,  
A sheltered nook the Brownies found,  
Where conversation might go 'round.

Said one: "The people  
hereabout  
Their wood supply have  
taken out;  
But while they stripped  
the timber lot,  
The village parson they  
forgot.



Now that good man, the story goes,  
As best he can, must warm his toes."

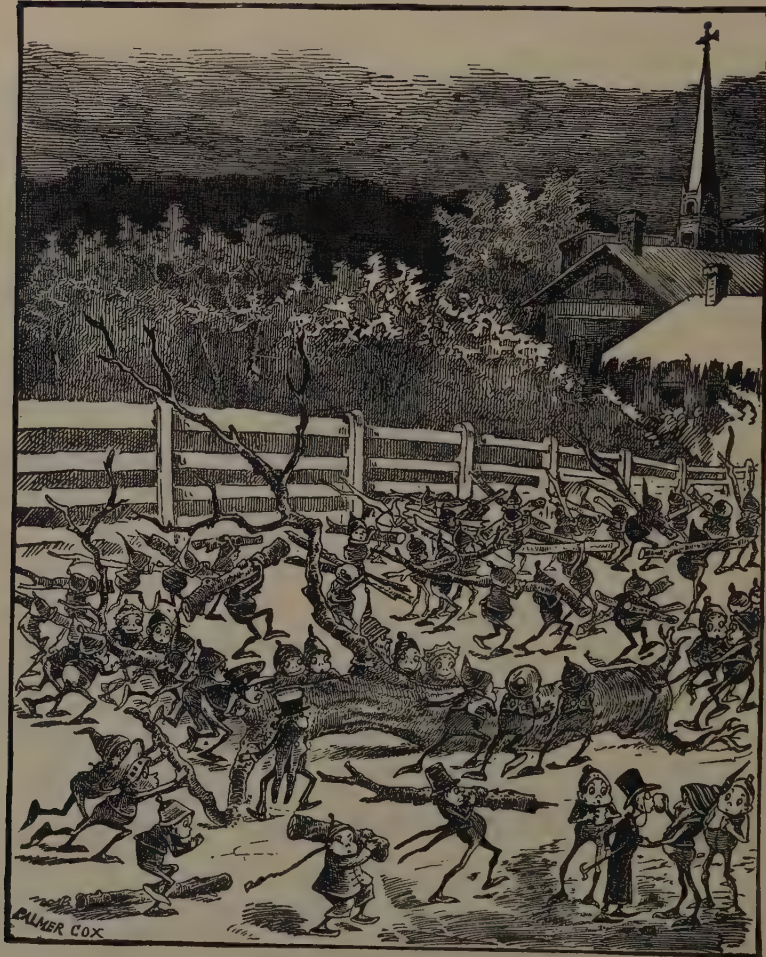
Another spoke: "The way is clear  
To show both skill and courage here.  
You 're not the sort, I know, to shirk:  
And coward-like to flee from work.  
You act at once whene'er you find  
A chance to render service kind,  
Nor wait to see what others do  
In matters that appeal to you.

"This task in waiting must be done  
Before another day has run.  
The signs of change are in the air;  
A storm is near though skies are fair;

As oft when smiles the broadest lie,  
The tears are nearest to the eye.  
To work let every Brownie bend,  
And prove to-night the parson's friend.  
We 'll not take oxen from the stall,  
That through the day must pull and haul,  
Nor horses from the manger lead;  
But let them take the rest they need.  
Since mystic power is at our call,  
By our own selves we 'll do it all.  
Our willing arms shall take the place  
Of clanking chain and leathern trace,  
And 'round the door the wood we 'll strew  
Until we hide the house from view."

At once the Brownies sought the ground  
Where fuel could with ease be found,—  
A place where forest-fires had spread,  
And left the timber scorched and dead.

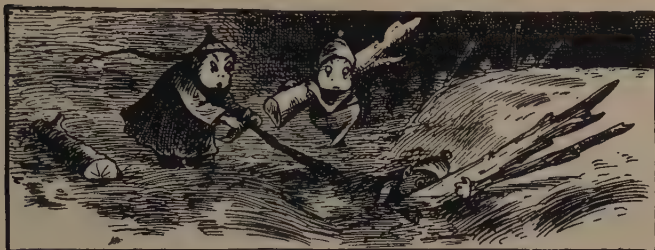
And there throughout the chilly night  
They tugged and tore with all their might;  
Some bearing branches as their load;  
With lengthy poles still others strode,



Or struggled till they scarce could see,  
With logs that bent them like a V;  
While more from under drifts of snow  
Removed old trees, and made them go  
Like plows along the icy street,



With half their limbs and roots complete.  
 Some found it hard to train their log  
 To keep its place through jolt and jog,  
 While some, mistaking ditch for road,  
 Were almost buried with their load,  
 And but for friends and promptest care,  
 The morning light had found them there.



The wind that night was cold and keen,  
 And frosted Brownies oft were seen.  
 They clapped their hands and stamped their toes,  
 They rubbed with snow each numbing nose,  
 And drew the frost from every face  
 Before it proved a painful case.



And thus, in spite of every ill,  
 The task was carried forward still.  
 Some were by nature well designed  
 For work of this laborious kind,  
 And never felt so truly great,  
 As when half crushed beneath a weight.  
 While wondering comrades stood aghast,  
 And thought each step must be the last.

But some were slight and ill could bear  
 The heavy loads that proved their share,



Though at some sport or cunning plan  
They far beyond their comrades ran.

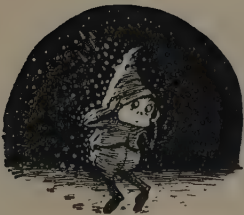
Around the house some staid to pile  
The gathered wood in proper style;  
Which ever harder work they found  
As high and higher rose the mound

Above the window-sill it grew,  
And next, the cornice hid from view;  
And, ere the dawn had forced a stop,  
The pile o'erlooked the chimney-top.

Some hands were sore, some backs were blue,  
And legs were scraped with slipping through  
Where ice and snow had left their mark  
On rounded log and smoothest bark.

That morning, when the parson rose,  
Against the pane he pressed his nose,  
And tried the outer world to scan  
To learn how signs of weather ran.

But, 'round the house, behind, before,  
In front of window, shed, and door,  
The wood was piled to such a height  
But little sky was left in sight!



When next he climbed his pulpit stair,  
He touched upon the strange affair,  
And asked a blessing rich to fall  
Upon the heads and homes of all  
Who through the night had worked so hard  
To heap the fuel 'round the yard.

His hearers knew they had no claim  
To such a blessing if it came,  
But whispered: "We don't understand—  
It must have been the Brownie Band."

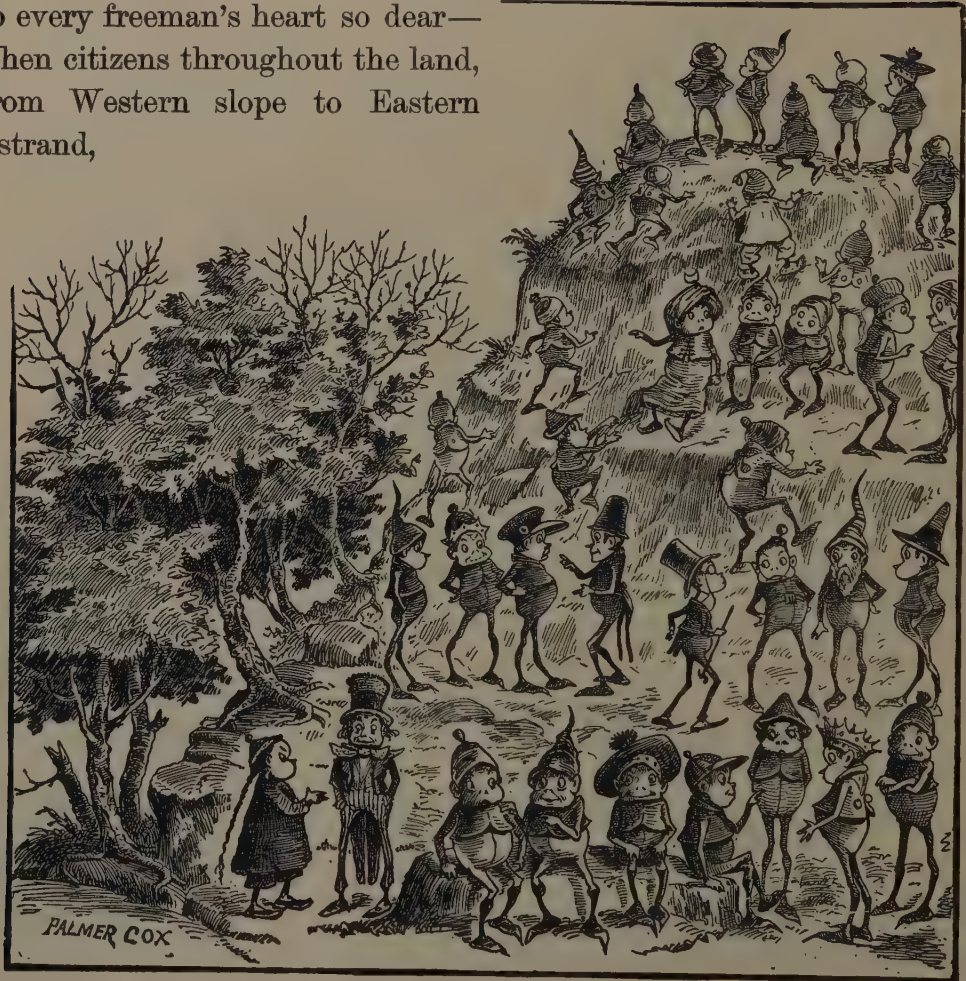




## THE BROWNIES' FOURTH OF JULY.

WHEN Independence Day was nigh,  
And children laid their pennies by,  
Arranging plans how every cent  
Should celebrate the grand event,  
The Brownies in their earnest way  
Expressed themselves about the day.

Said one: "The time is drawing near—  
To every freeman's heart so dear—  
When citizens throughout the land,  
From Western slope to Eastern  
strand,



Will celebrate with booming gun  
Their liberties so dearly won!"

"A fitting time," another cried,

"For us, who many sports have tried,

To introduce our mystic art

And in some manner play a part."

A third replied, with beaming face:

"Trust me to lead you to a place

Where fireworks of every kind

Are made to suit the loyal mind.

"There, Roman candles are in store,  
And bombs that like a cannon roar;  
While 'round the room one may behold  
Designs of every size and mold,—  
The wheels that turn, when all ablaze,  
And scatter sparks a thousand ways;  
The eagle bird, with pinions spread;  
The busts of statesmen ages dead;  
And him who led his tattered band  
Against invaders of the land

Until he shook the country free  
From grasp of kings beyond the sea.

"We may, from this supply, with ease  
Secure a share whene'er we please;  
And on these hills behind the town  
That to the plain go sloping down,

We 'll take position, come what may,  
And celebrate the Nation's Day."

That eve, when stars began to shine,  
The eager band was formed in line.



And, acting on the plans well laid,  
A journey to the town was made.

The Brownies never go astray,  
However puzzling is the way;  
With guides before and guards behind,  
They cut through every turn and wind,  
Until a halt was made at last  
Before a building bolted fast.  
But those who think they 'd turn around  
And leave because no keys are found  
Should entertain the thought no more,  
But study up the Brownie lore.

They rummaged boxes piled around  
And helped themselves to what they found,  
Some eager to secure the wheel  
That would so many sparks reveal.  
Some active members of the band  
To bombs and crackers turned their hand,  
While more those emblems sought to find  
That call the Nation's birth to mind,  
And bring from every side the shout  
When all their meaning blazes out.



Ere long, upon the homeward road  
They hastened with their novel load.  
And when the bell in chapel tower  
Gave notice of the midnight hour,



The ruddy flame, the turning wheel,  
The showering sparks and deafening peal  
Showed Brownies in the proper way  
Gave welcome to the glorious day.



The lighted eagles, through the night,  
Looked down like constellations bright;  
The rockets, whizzing to and fro,  
Lit up the slumbering town below;

While, towering there with eyes of fire,  
As when he made his foes retire,  
Above all emblems duly raised,  
The Father of his Country blazed.



But ere the Brownies' large supply  
Had gone to light the summer sky,

Some plasters would have served the band  
Much better than the goods on hand;  
For there were cases all about  
Where Brownies thought the fuse was out,  
Till with a sudden fizz and flare  
It caught the jokers unaware.

At times, in spite of warning cries,  
Some proved too slow at closing eyes;  
Some ears were stunned, some noses got  
Too close to something quick and hot,  
And fingers bore for days and weeks  
The trace of hasty powder's freaks.

Some dodging 'round would get a share  
Of splendor meant for upper air,  
And with a black or speckled face

They ran about from place to place,  
To find new dangers blaze and burn  
On every side where'er they'd turn.

But few were there who felt afraid  
Of bursting bomb or fusillade,  
And to the prize they'd stick and hang  
Until it vanished with a "bang,"  
Or darting upward seemed to fly  
On special business to the sky.







But there, while darkness wrapped the hill,  
The Brownies celebrated still;  
For, pleasures such as this they found  
But seldom in their roaming 'round;  
And with reluctant feet they fled  
When morning tinged the sky with red.

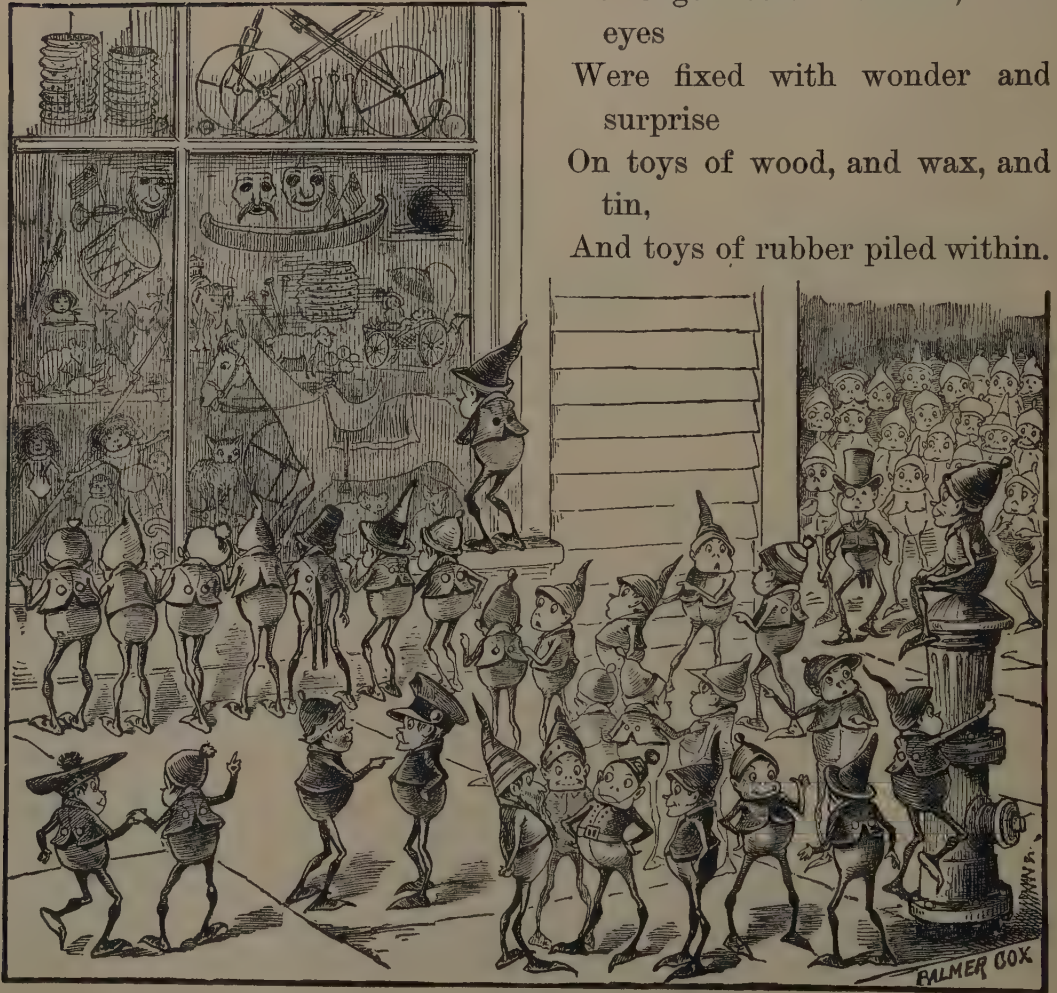




## THE BROWNIES IN THE TOY-SHOP.

AS SHADES of evening settled down,  
The Brownies rambled through the town,  
To pry at this, to pause at that;  
By something else to hold a chat,  
And in their free and easy vein  
Express themselves in language plain.

At length before a store, their  
eyes  
Were fixed with wonder and  
surprise  
On toys of wood, and wax, and  
tin,  
And toys of rubber piled within.



Said one, "In all our wandering 'round,  
A sight like this we never found.  
When such a passing glimpse we gain,  
What marvels must the shelves contain!"

Another said, "It must be here  
Old Santa Claus comes every year  
To gather up his large supply,  
When Christmas Eve is drawing nigh,  
That children through the land may find  
They still are treasured in his mind."

A third remarked, "Ere long he may  
Again his yearly visit pay;  
Before he comes to strip the place,  
We 'll rummage shelf and box, and case,  
Until the building we explore  
From attic roof to basement floor,  
And prove what pleasure may be found  
In all the wonders stowed around."

Not long were they content to view  
Through dusty panes those wonders new:  
And, in a manner quite their own,  
They made their way through wood and stone.

And then surprises met the band  
In odd conceits from every land.  
Well might the Brownies stand and stare  
At all the objects crowded there!  
Here, things of gentle nature lay  
In safety, midst the beasts of prey;  
The goose and fox, a friendly pair,  
Reposed beside the lamb and bear;

There horses stood for boys to ride;  
Here boats were waiting for the tide,



While ships of war, with every sail  
Unfurled, were anchored to a nail;  
There soldiers stood in warlike bands;  
And naked dolls held out their hands,  
As though to urge the passers-by  
To take them from the public eye.  
This way and that, the Brownies ran;  
To try the toys they soon began.





The Jack-in-box, so quick and strong,  
 With staring eyes and whiskers long,  
 Now o'er and o'er was set and sprung  
 Until the scalp was from it flung

And then they crammed him in  
 his case,

With wig and night-cap in their  
 place,

To give some customer a start  
 When next the jumper flew  
 apart.

The trumpets, drums, and weap-  
 ons bright

Soon filled them all with great  
 delight.

Like troops preparing for their  
 foes,

In single ranks and double  
 rows,



They learned the arts of war, as told  
 By printed books and veterans old;  
 With swords of tin and guns of wood,  
 They wheeled about, and marched or stood,

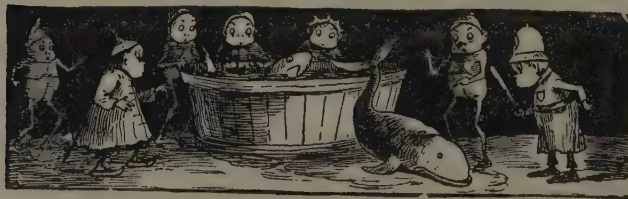


And went through skirmish  
drill and all,  
From room to room by bugle-  
call;  
There Marathon and Waterloo  
And Bunker Hill were fought  
anew;  
And most of those in war array  
At last went limping from the  
fray.  
The music-box poured forth an  
air  
That charmed the dullest spirits  
there,

Till, yielding to the pleasing sound,  
They danced with dolls a lively round.

There fish were working tail and fin  
In seas confined by wood and tin;  
The canvas shark and rubber whale  
Seemed ill content in dish or pail,  
And leaping all obstructions o'er  
Performed their antics on the floor.

Some found at marbles greatest fun,  
And still they played, and still they won,  
Until they claimed as winners, all  
The shop could furnish, large and small.



More gave the singing tops no rest—  
But kept them spinning at their best  
Until some wonder strange and new  
To other points attention drew.



The rocking-horse that wildly rose,  
Now on its heels, now on its nose,  
Was forced to bear so great a load  
It seemed to founder on the road,  
Then tumble feebly to the floor,  
Never to lift a rocker more.

No building in the country wide  
With more attractions was supplied,  
No shop or store throughout the land  
Could better suit the Brownie band.  
For when some flimsy toy gave way

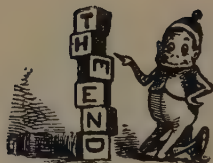
And 'round the room in pieces lay





'T was hardly missed in such a store,  
With wonders fairly running o'er:  
To something else about the place  
The happy Brownie turned his face,  
And only feared the sun would call  
Before he'd had his sport with all.

Thus, through the shop in greatest gle  
They rattled 'round, the sights to see,  
Till stars began to dwindle down,  
And morning crept into the town.  
And then, with all the speed they **knew**  
Away to fores' shades they flew.













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